

TULSIDAS

A contemporary of Shakespeare, Tulsidas (1532-1623) was known for singing the glory of Rama, the prince of Ayodhya. The *Ramcharitmanas*, Tulsidas' version of the Ramayana in Awadhi, a dialect of Hindi, consists of over 1,000 stanzas of about 12 to 18 lines each. Tulsi's words are musical and hypnotic. Every village and town in the Hindi heartland has a troupe that enacts the story of Rama based on Tulsidas's work.

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SOORDAS



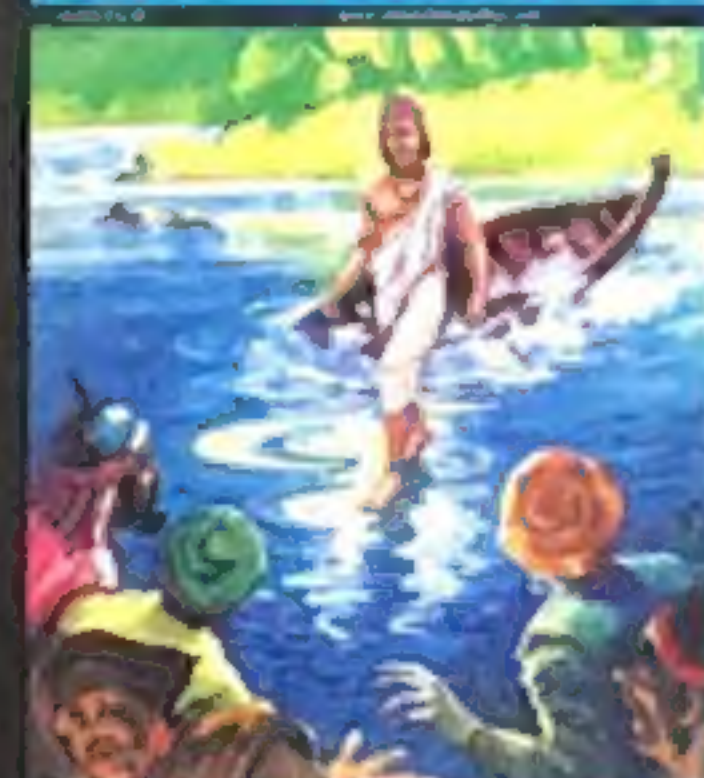
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VISIONARIES



TULSIDAS

THE POET WHO WROTE RAM-CHARIT-MANAS

Vol 551 | ₹50

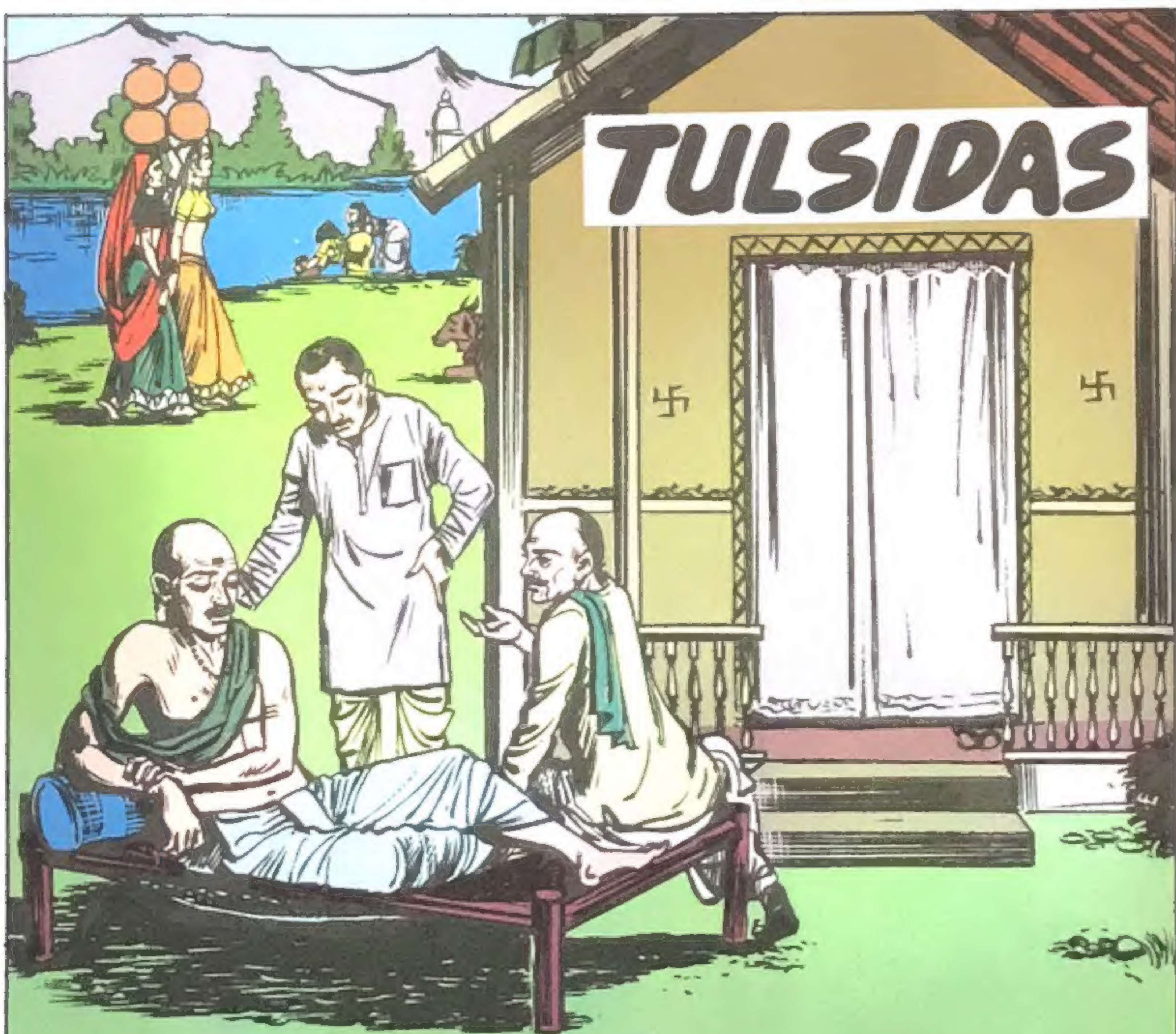


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TULSIDAS



PANDIT ATMARAM DUBEY SAT OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE, ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGA IN SAURON VILLAGE. HIS FRIENDS TRIED TO DISTRACT HIM WITH LIGHT TALK, BUT HE WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED FOR HIS WIFE, WHO WAS EXPECTING A BABY ANY MOMENT.

THE MAID, CHUNIA CAME RUNNING OUT OF HIS HOUSE.



PANDITJI!
IT'S A SON!
BUT THE
MOTHER IS
IN A COMA.



GOD, SAVE
MY WIFE.

PANDITJI,
YOU MUST
NOT LOSE
HEART. SHE
WILL BE
ALL RIGHT.

BUT THE MOTHER DIED.



AN ASTROLOGER WAS
SUMMONED.



THIS CHILD
BODES EVIL.
HE WILL
DESTROY THE
ENTIRE FAMILY.
ABANDON HIM.



GIVE UP
MY OWN
SON?



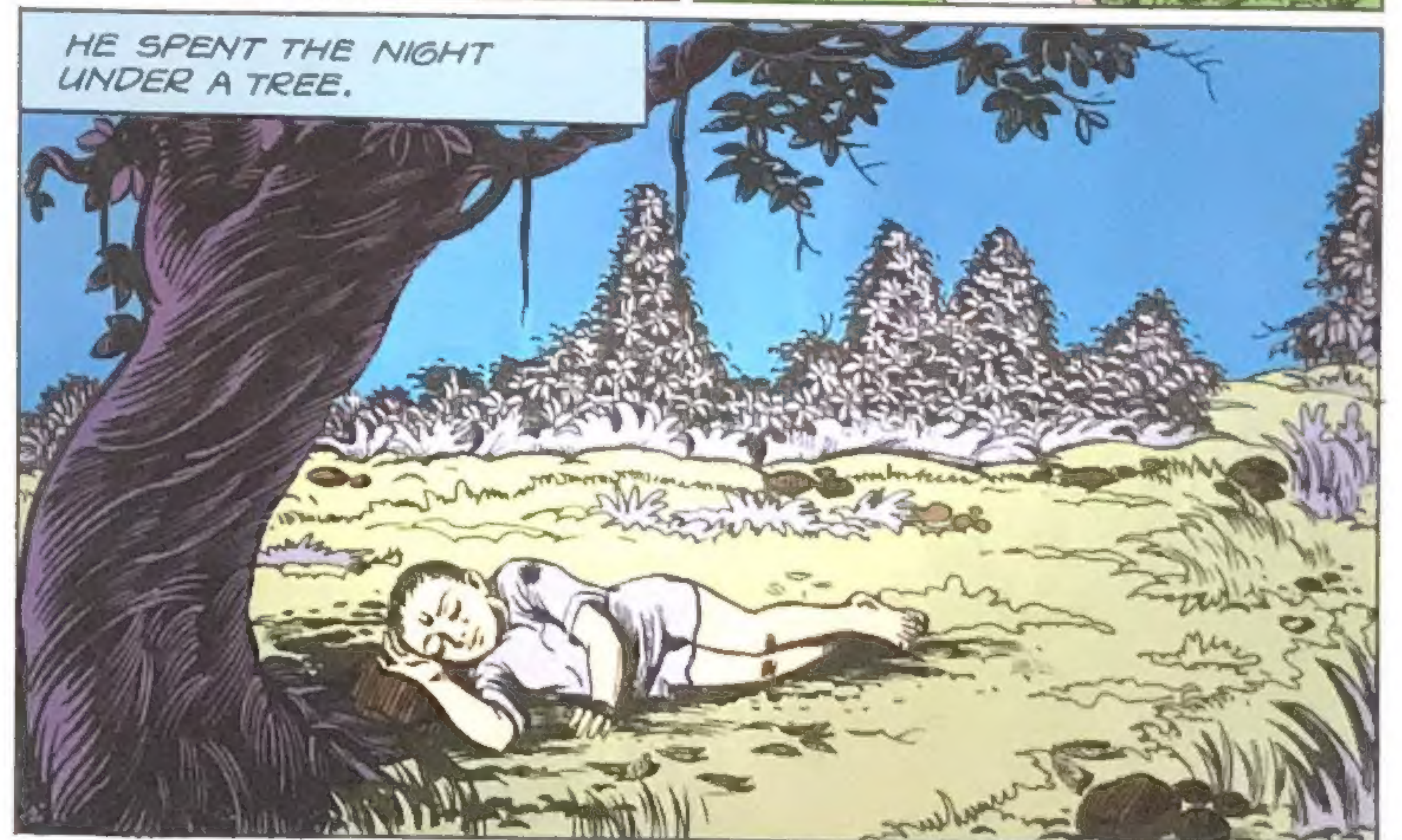
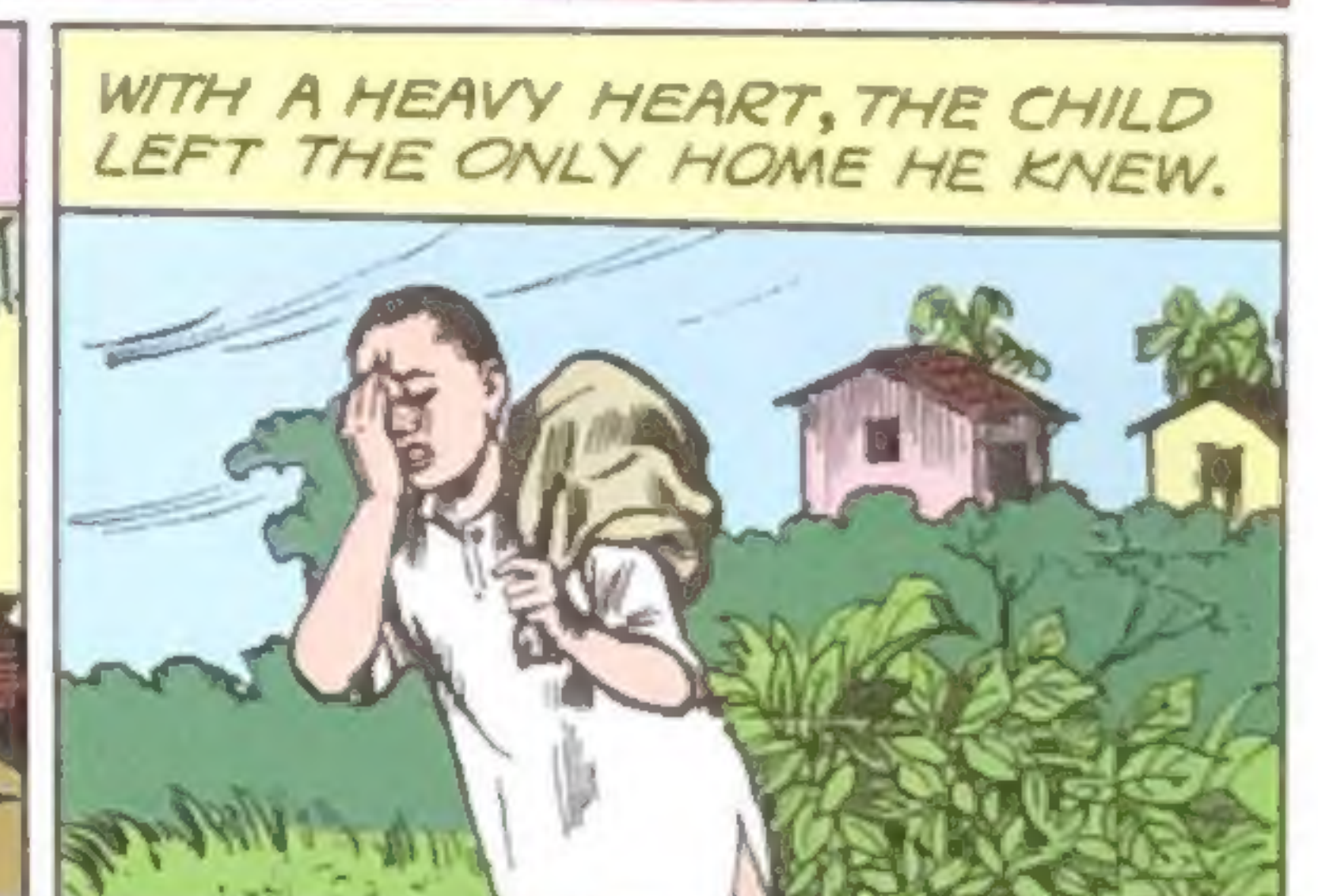
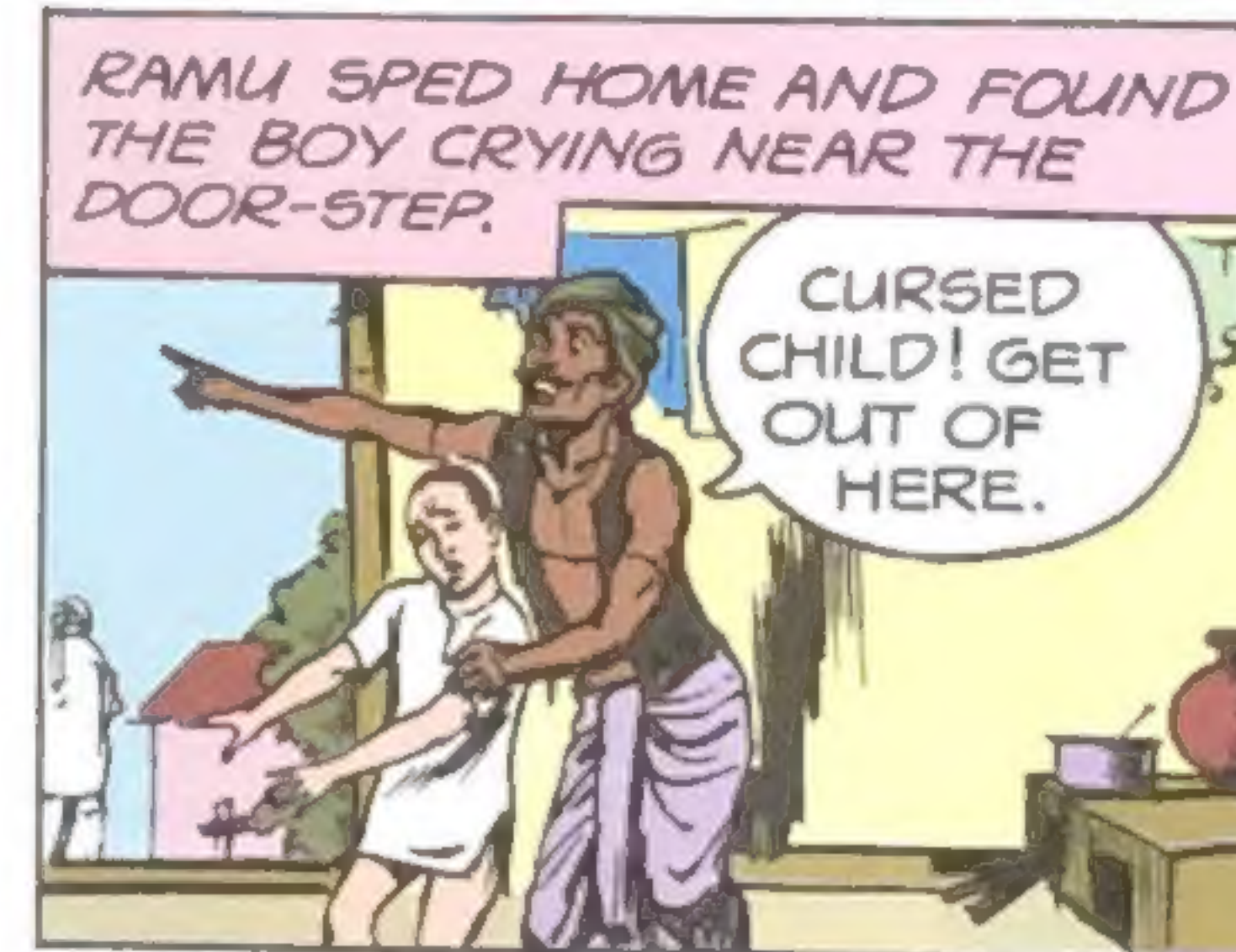
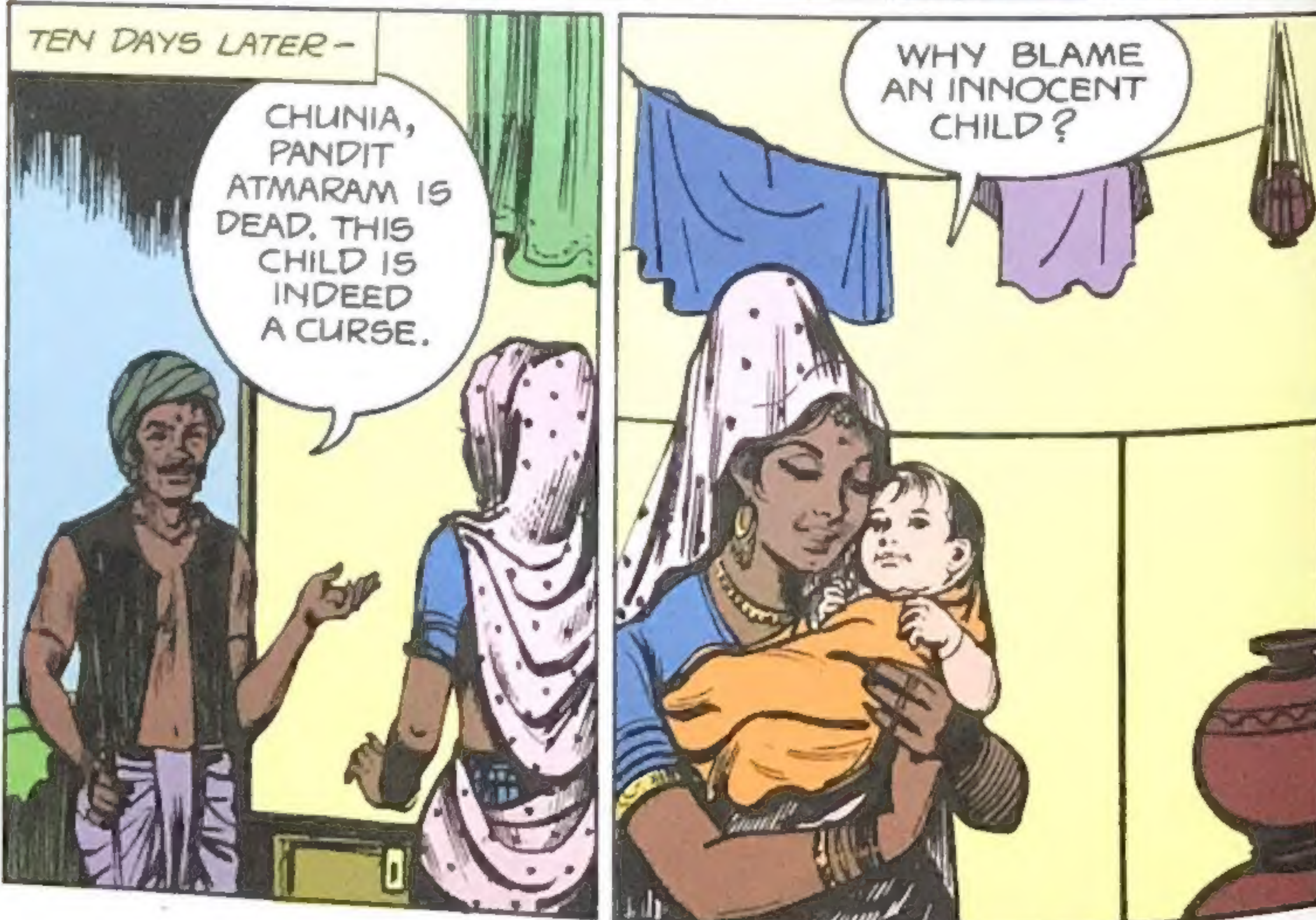
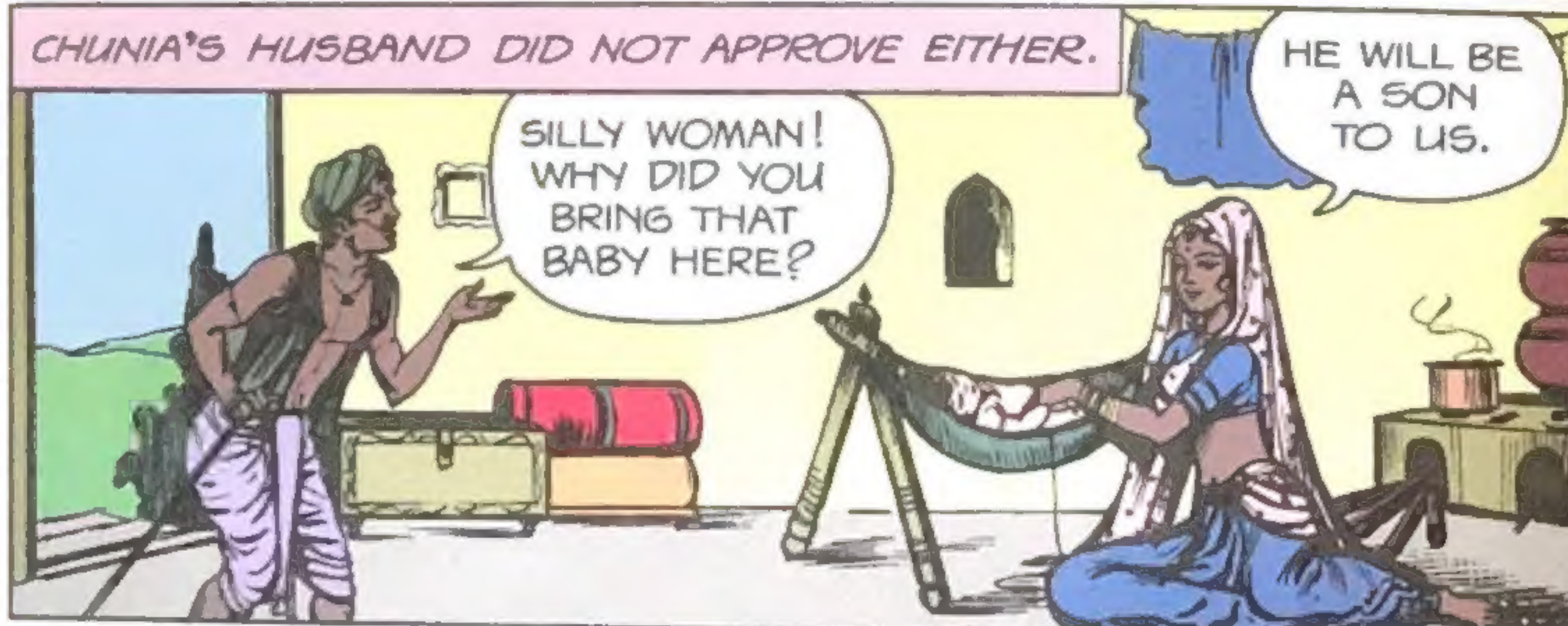
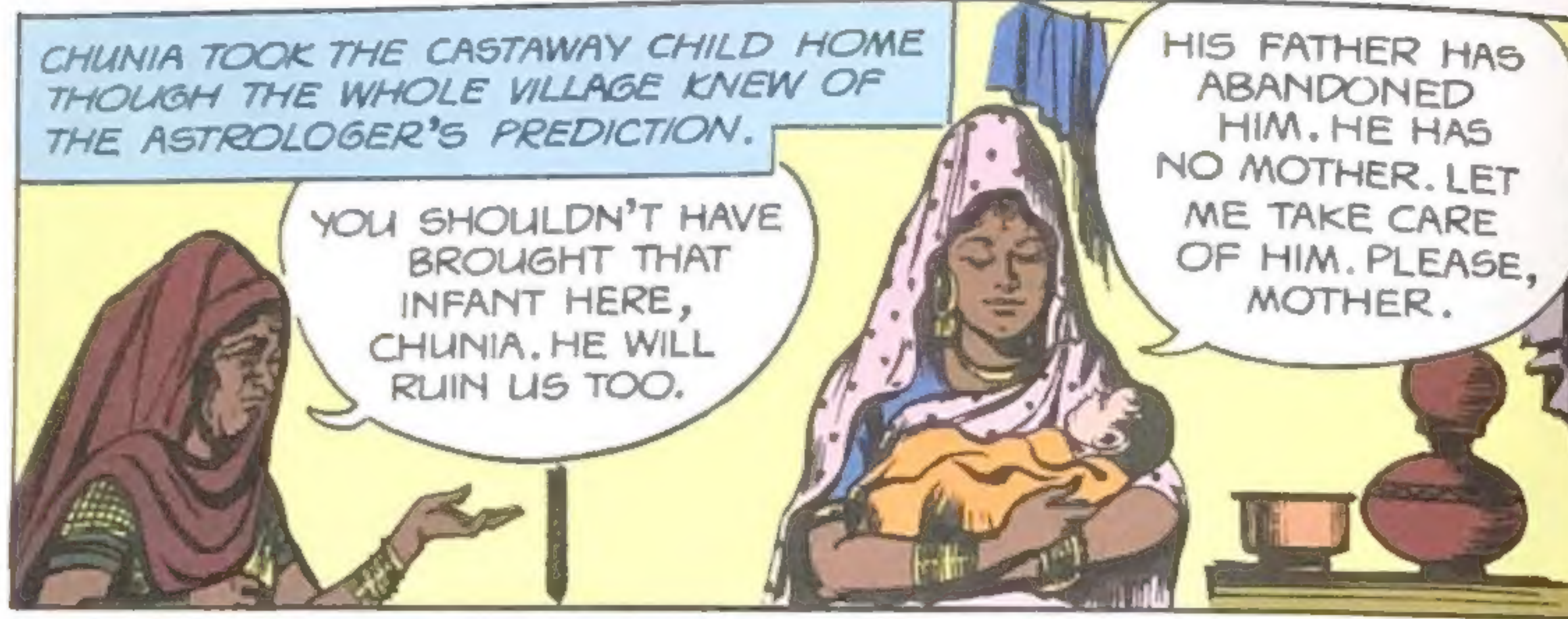
HE IS NO
SON WHO
BRINGS
DEATH TO
HIS MOTHER.

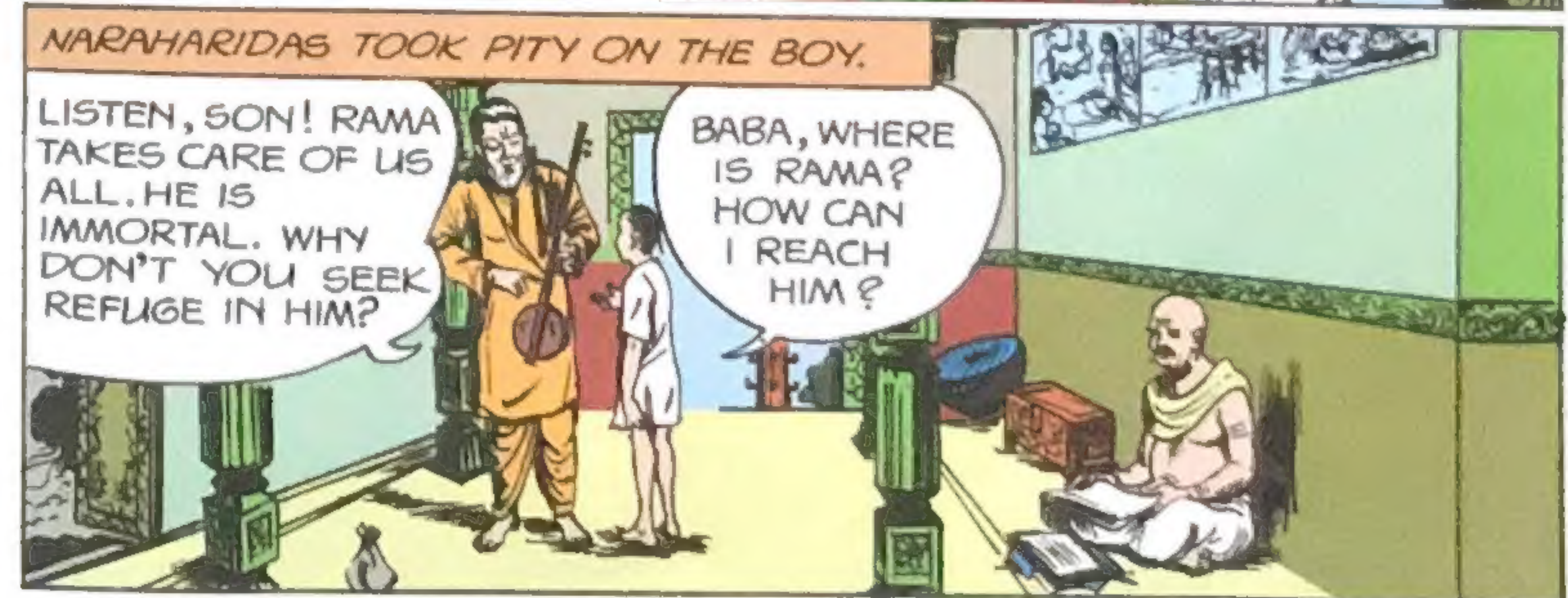
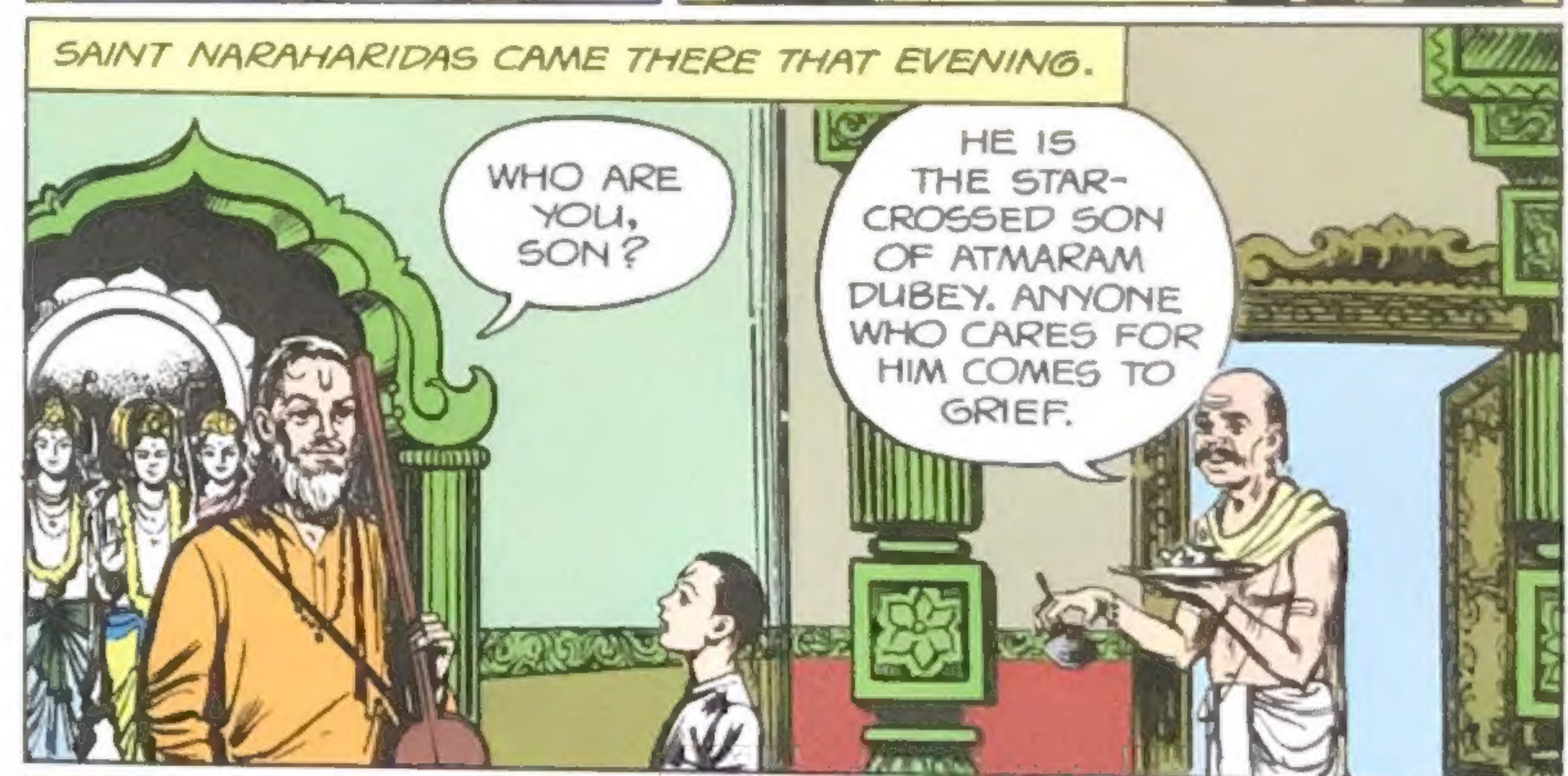
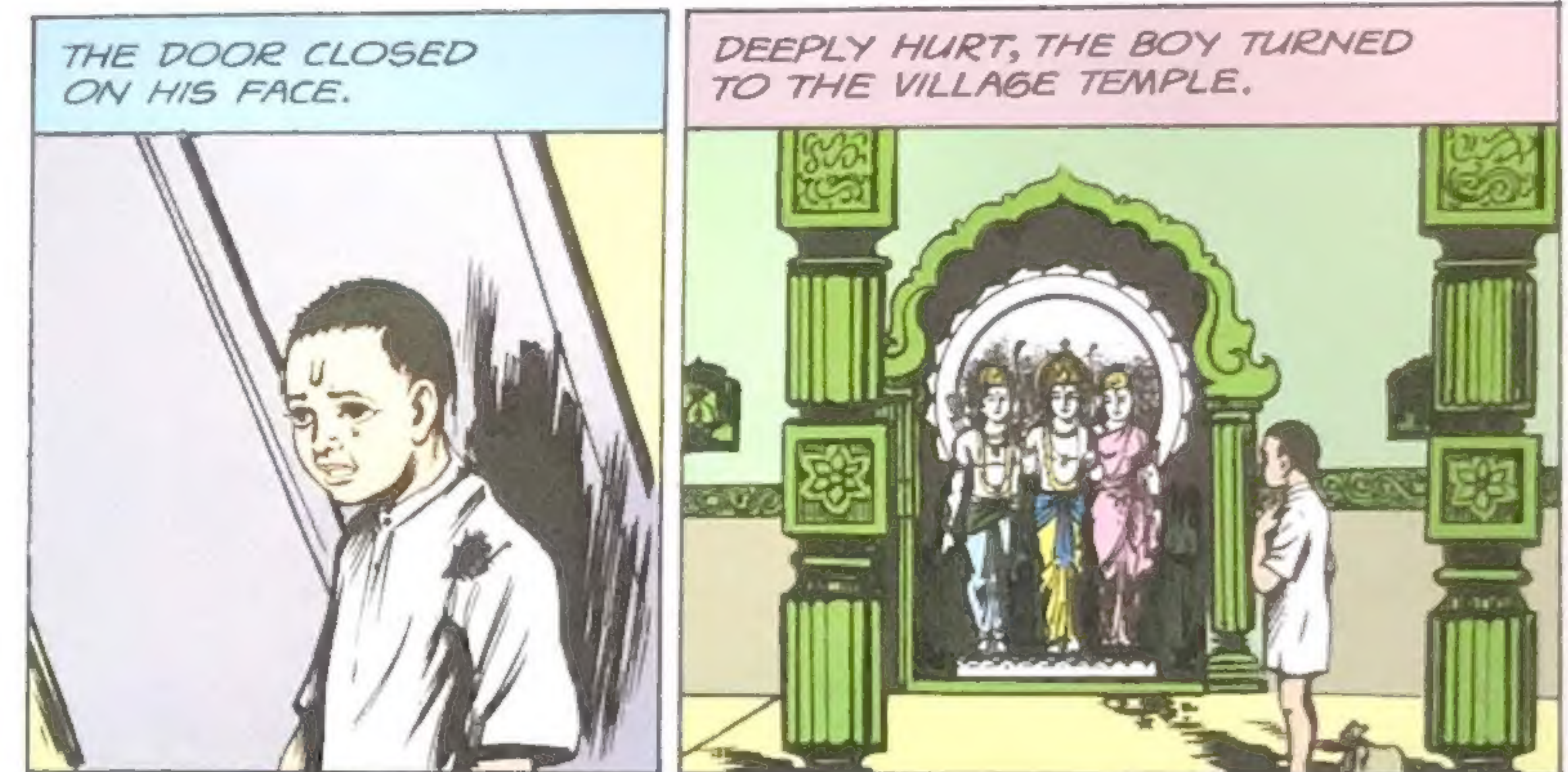
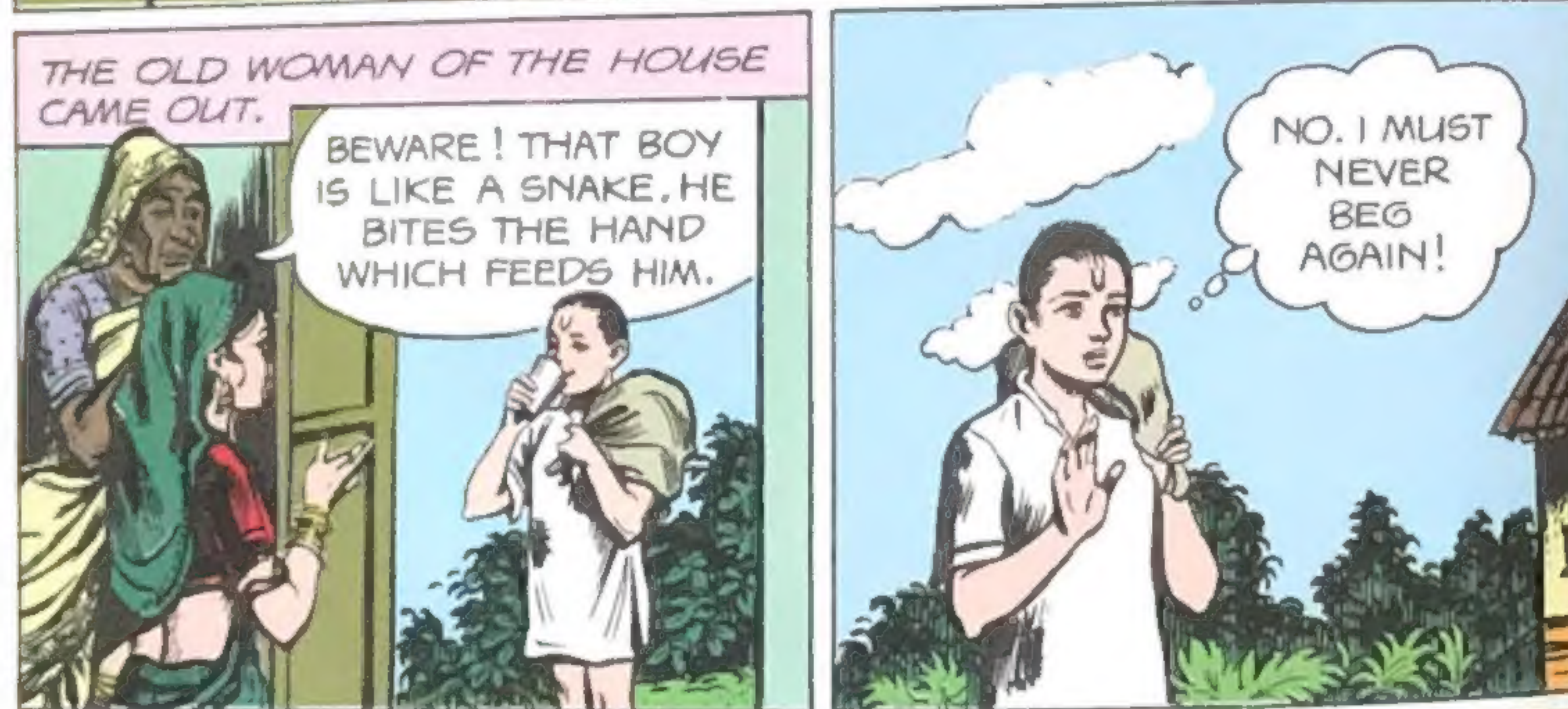
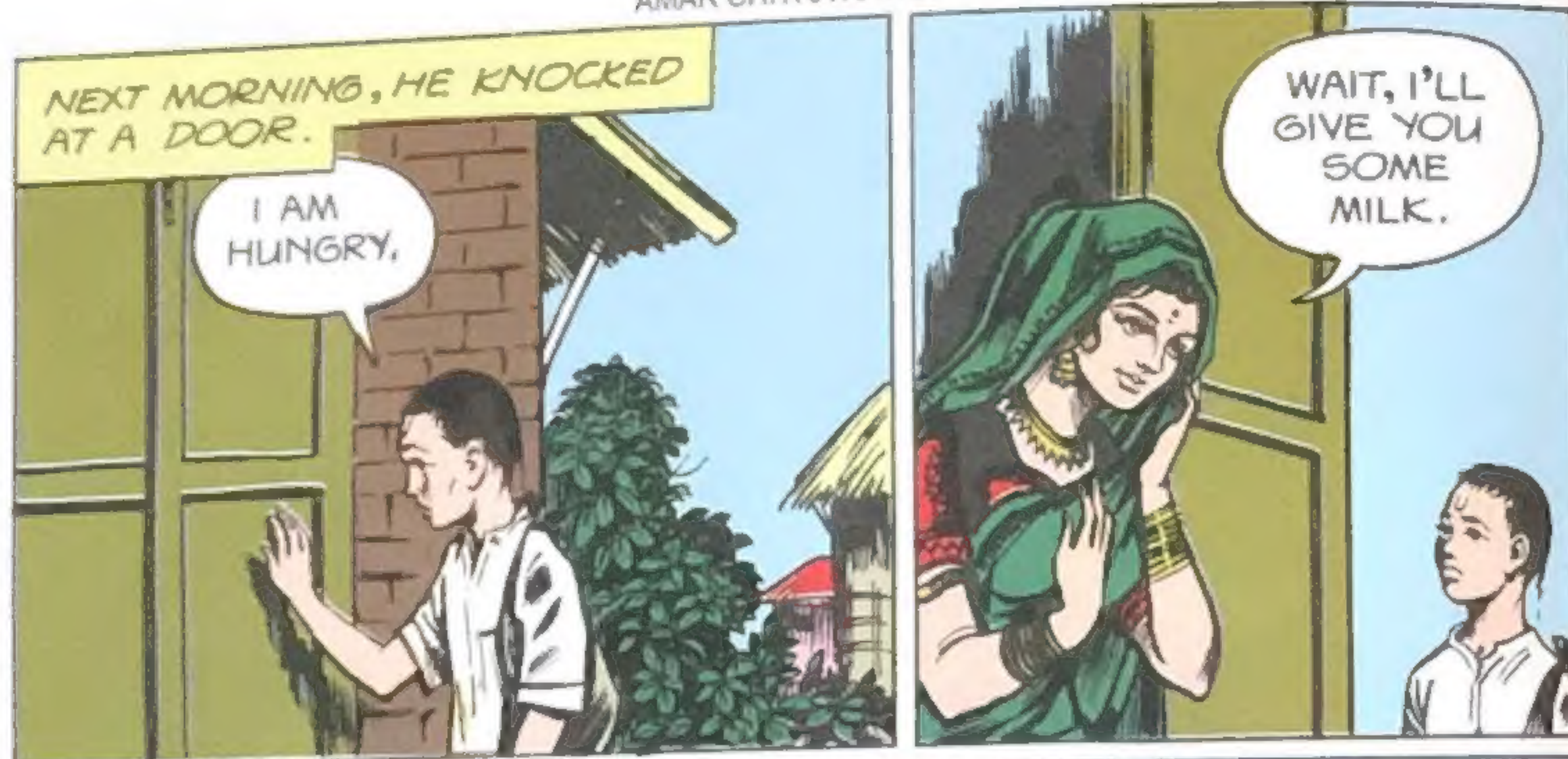


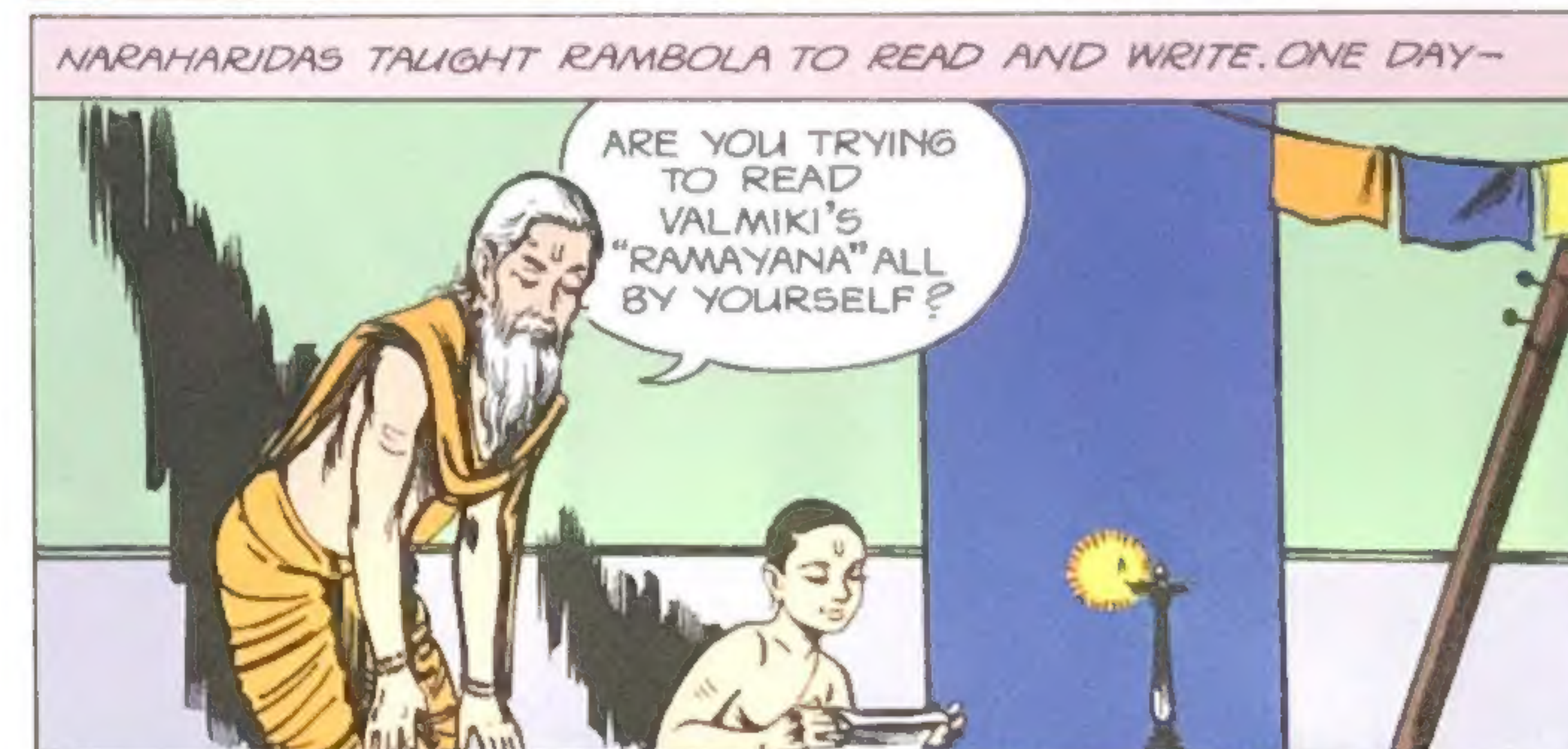
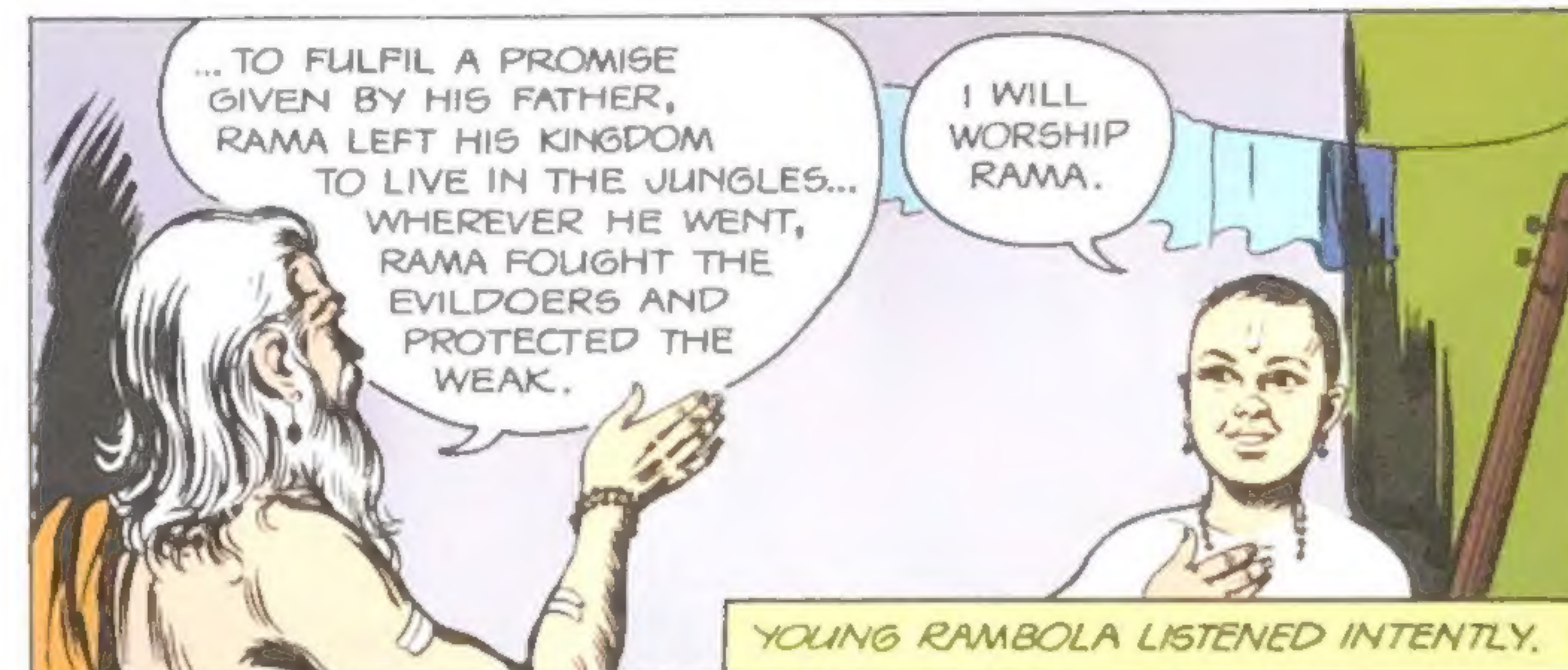
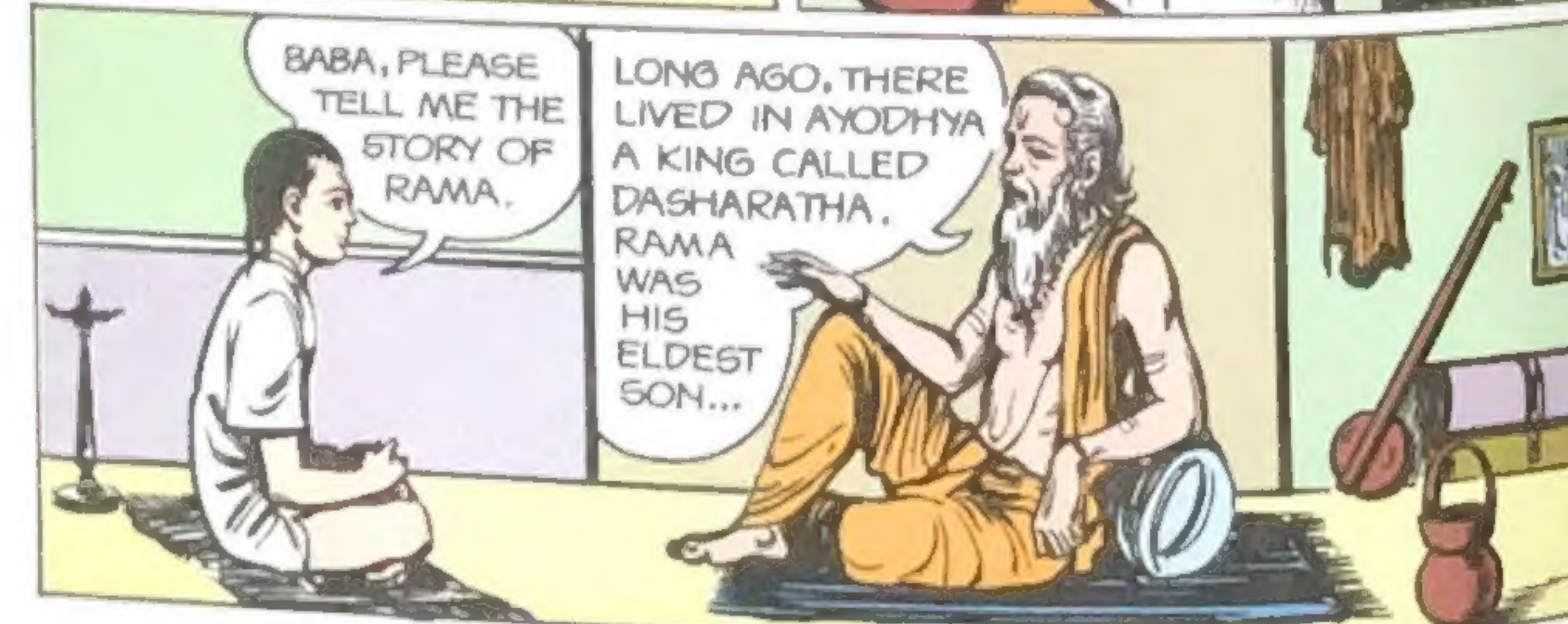
HE WILL RUIN
YOU TOO.
ABANDON
HIM! NOW!



OH, NO! THE
POOR
INNOCENT
BABY... I WILL
NOT LET
THAT HAPPEN.

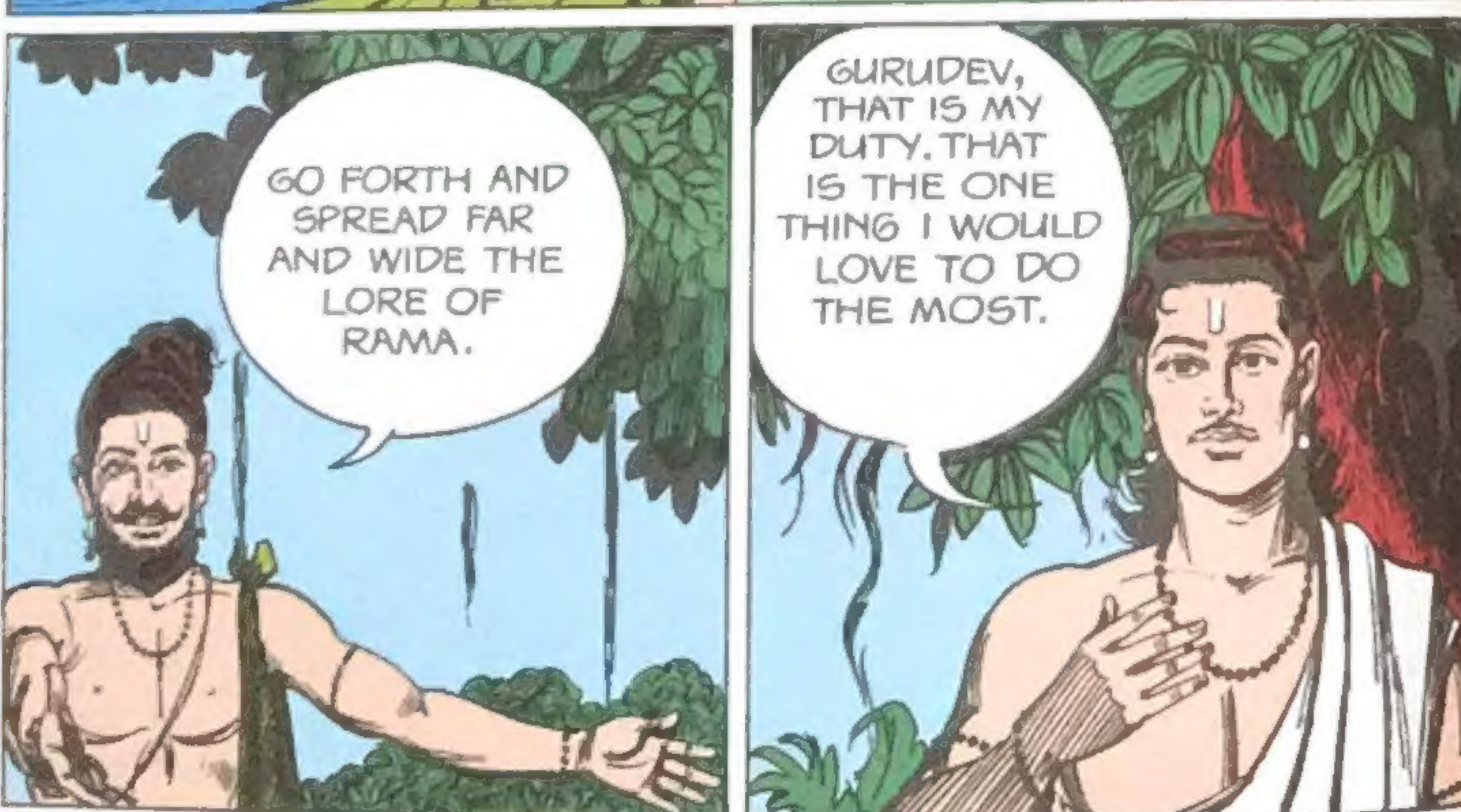




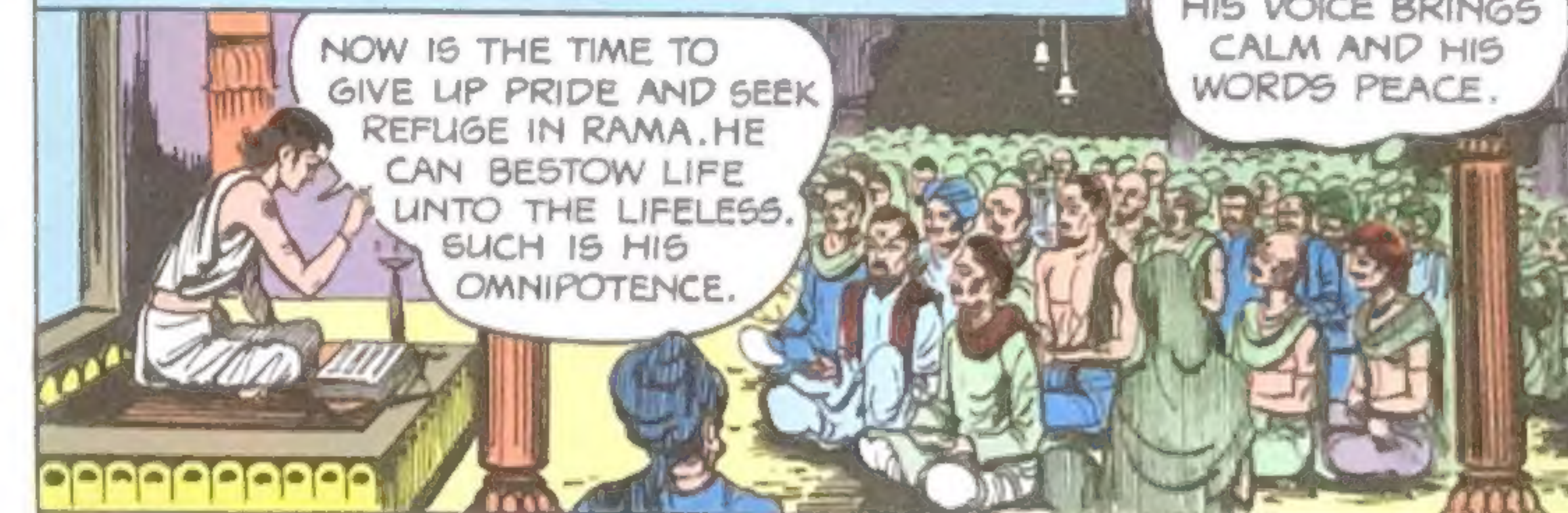




YEARS ROLLED BY. RAMBOLA LEARNT THE VEDAS AND OTHER HOLY SCRIPTURES. ONE DAY—

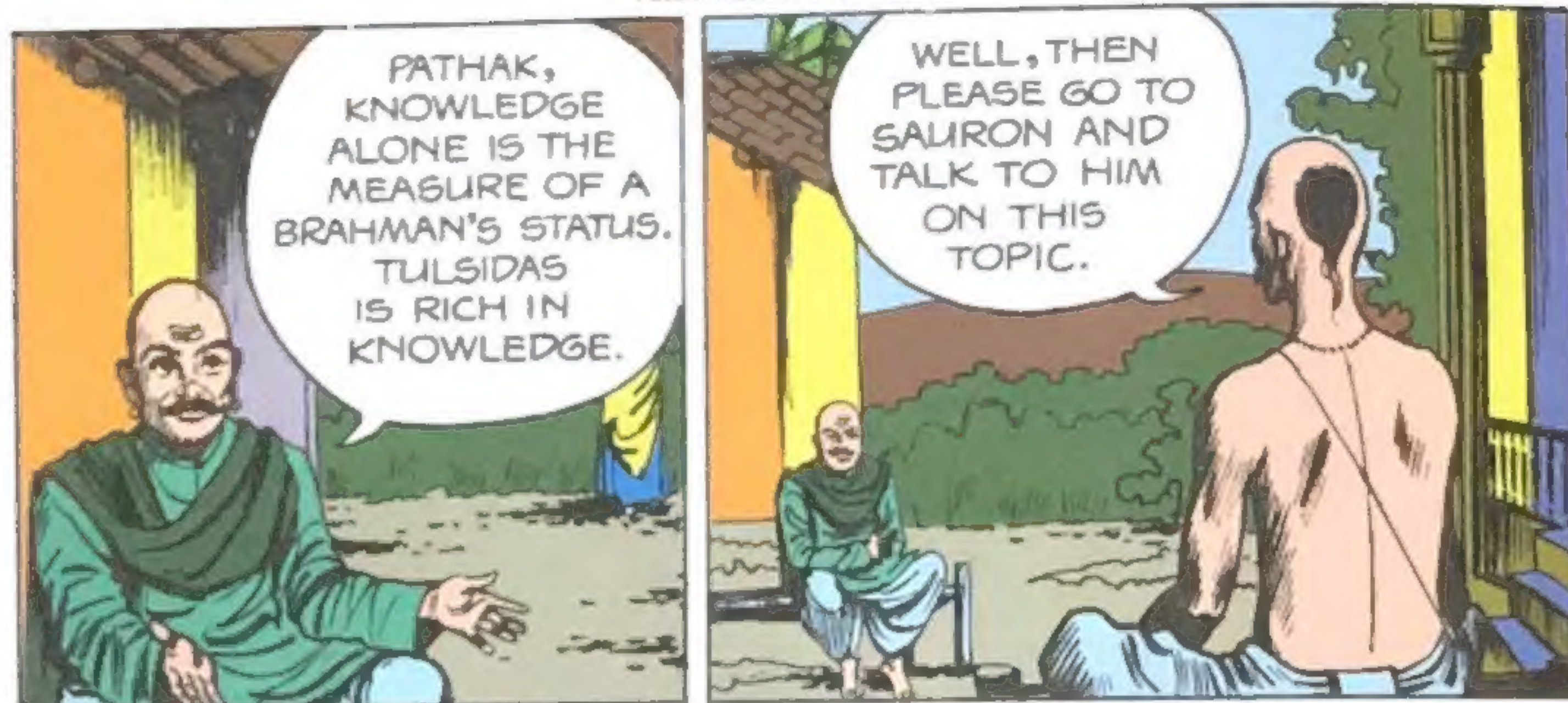


RAMBOLA RETURNED TO HIS HOME TOWN, SAURON AND BEGAN EARNESTLY TO GIVE DISCOURSES ON RAMA'S LIFE.

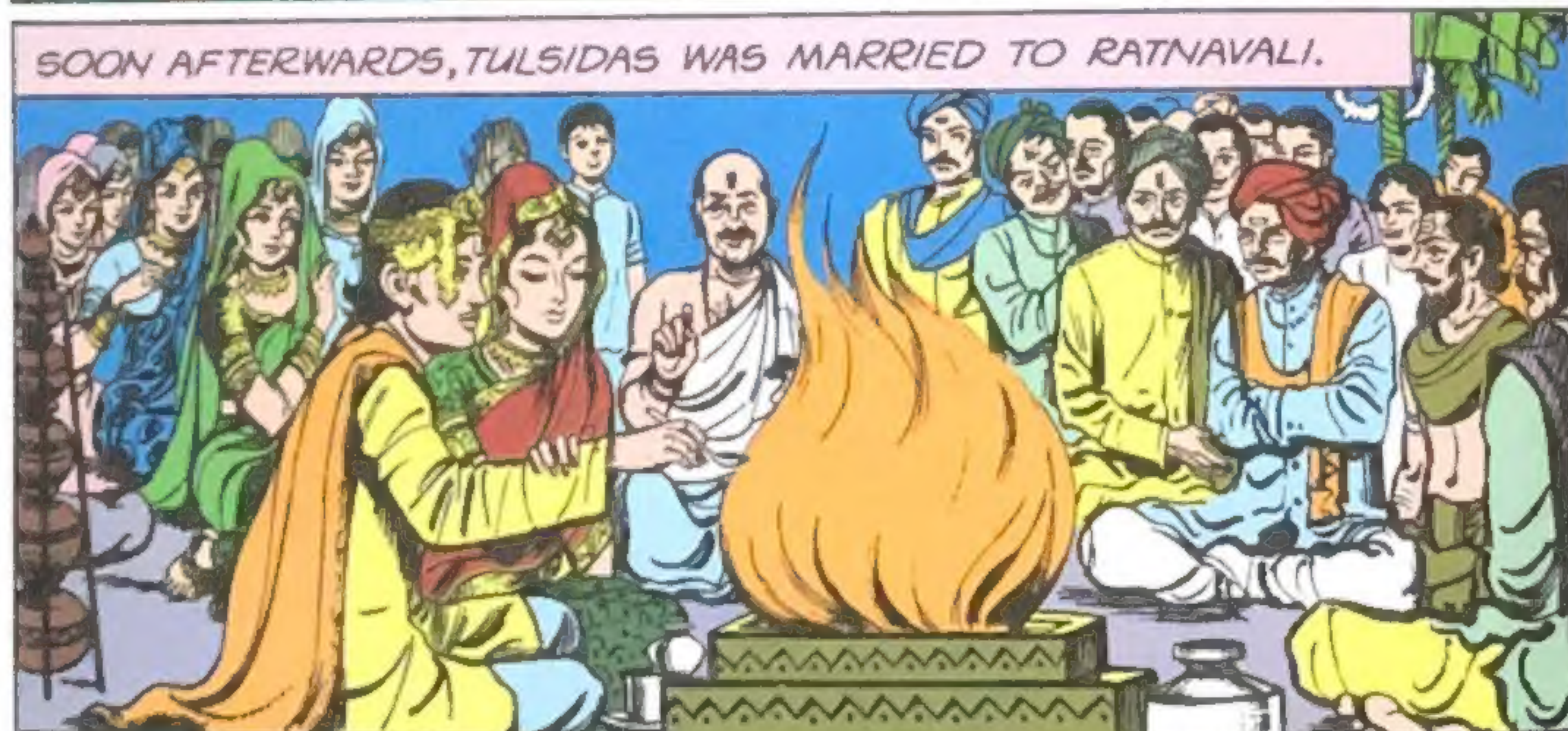


THEY NOW CALLED HIM TULSIDAS. HIS FAME SPREAD FAR AND WIDE. IN BADRI VILLAGE, IN THE HOUSE OF DINBANDHU PATHAK—

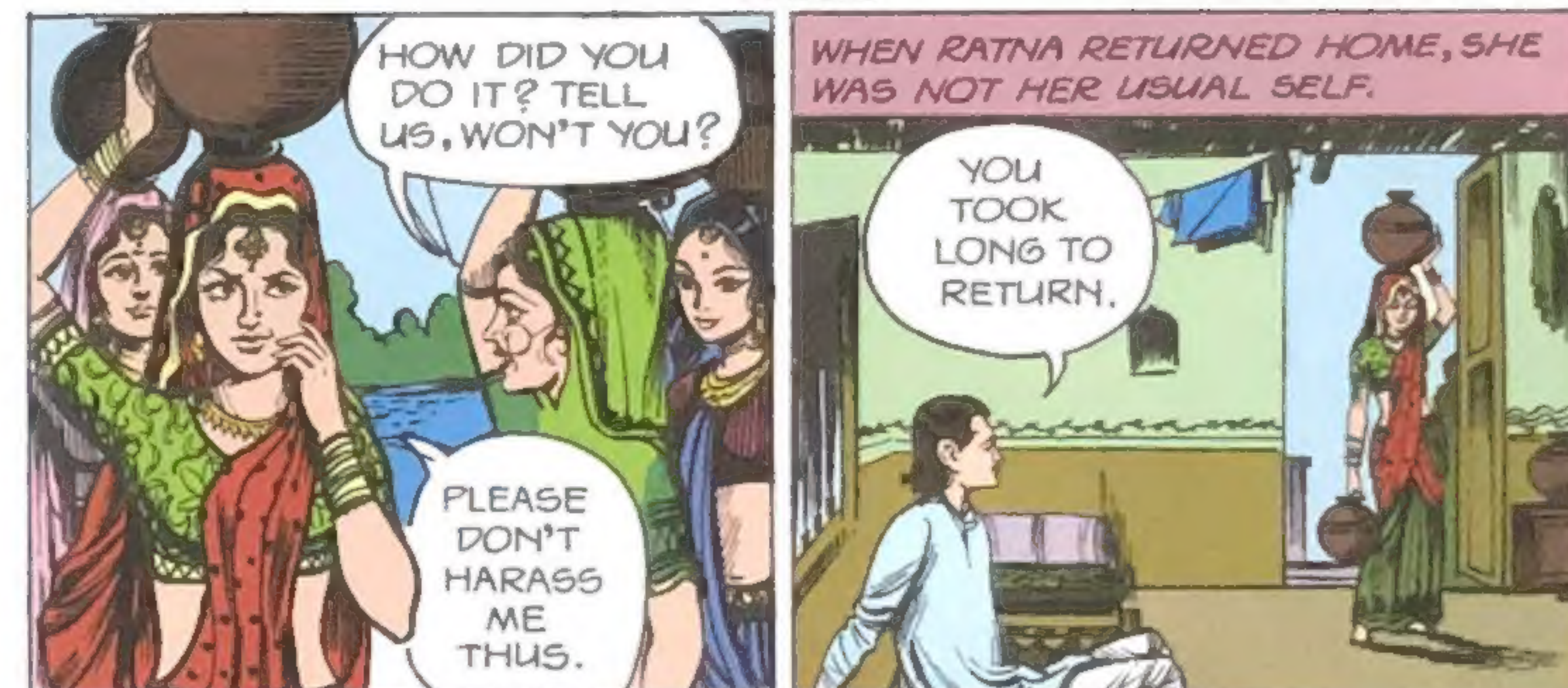




SOON AFTERWARDS, TULSIDAS WAS MARRIED TO RATNAVALI.



TULSIDAS WAS DEVOTED TO HIS WIFE. ONE DAY WHEN RATNAVALI WAS AT THE RIVERSIDE -



A FEW DAYS LATER, ANANTA, A BARBER FROM BADRI VILLAGE, CAME TO THEIR HOUSE.



HE RUSHED OUT OF THE HOUSE...



...AND REACHED THE RIVER BANK.



HE RETRACED HIS STEPS AND STARTED WALKING ALONG THE RIVER BANK.



JUST THEN, HE SAW A DEAD BODY FLOATING ON THE RIVER.



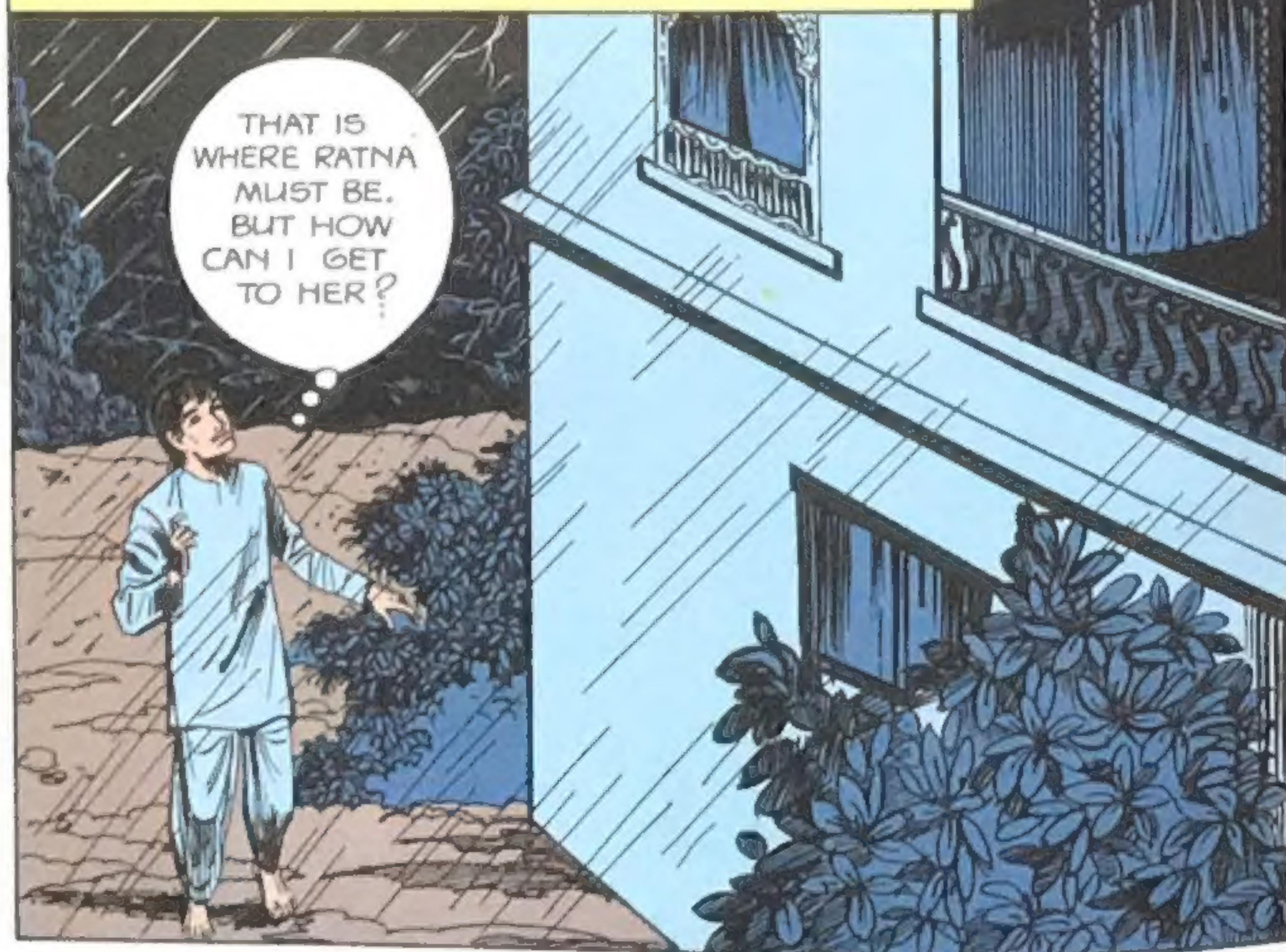
HE DID SO AND REACHED THE OTHER SIDE. BUT THE RAINS CAME IN TORRENTS AND SLOWED HIS PROGRESS.



IT WAS LATE AT NIGHT WHEN HE REACHED RATNAVALI'S FATHER'S HOME.



HE WENT ROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HOUSE.



HE SAW SOMETHING LONG HANGING FROM THE WINDOW.



WHAT IS THAT? A ROPE!

HE MISTOOK THE SNAKE TO BE A ROPE.



HE HAULED HIMSELF UP ON IT. RATNA! HERE I AM.

RATNA COULDN'T BELIEVE HER EYES.



BUT...BUT...THE RAINS...HOW DID YOU CROSS THE RIVER?

ON THE WINGS OF YOUR LOVE. LEAVE ALONE A RIVER, I CAN CROSS OCEANS WITH ITS HELP.

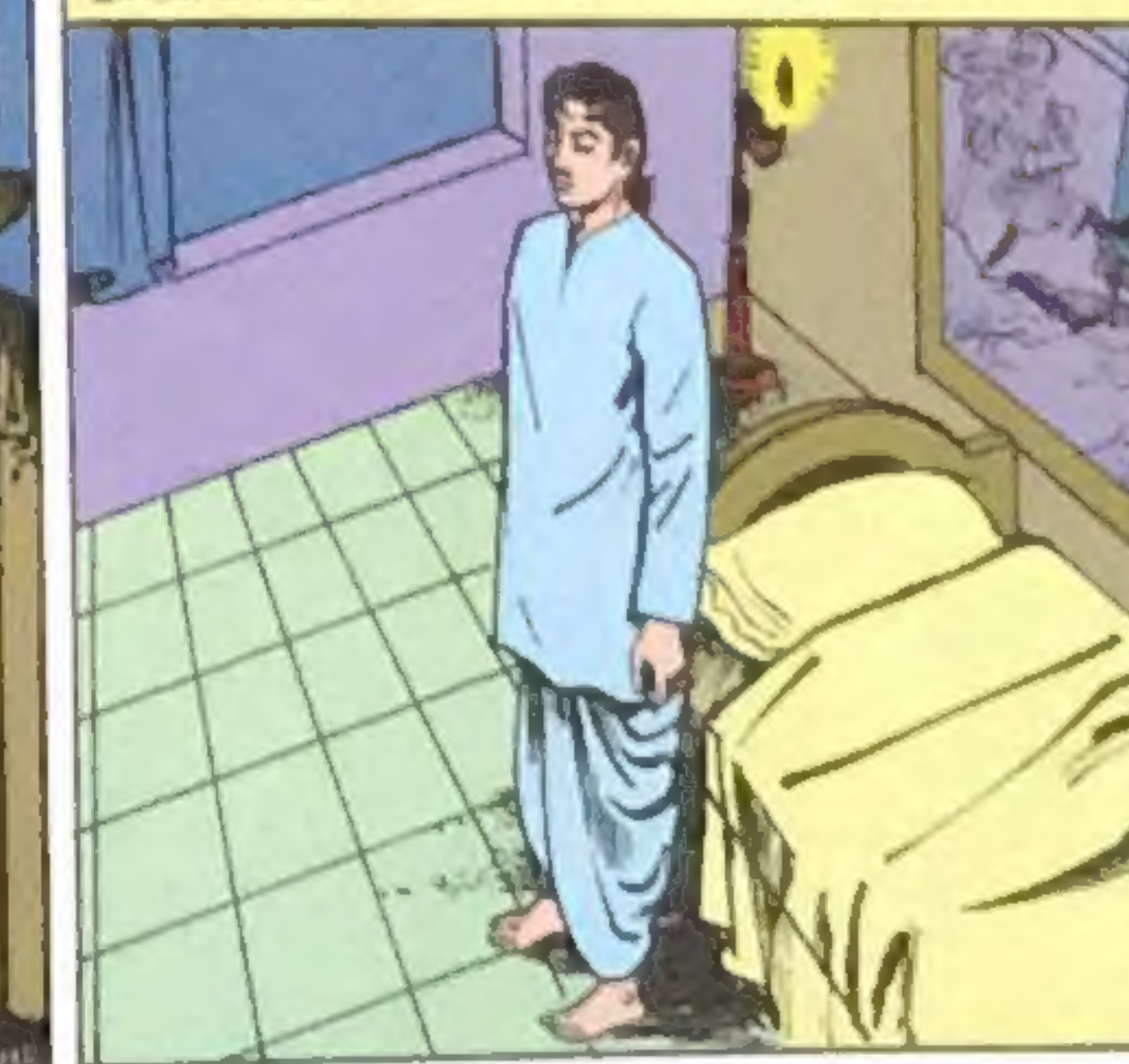


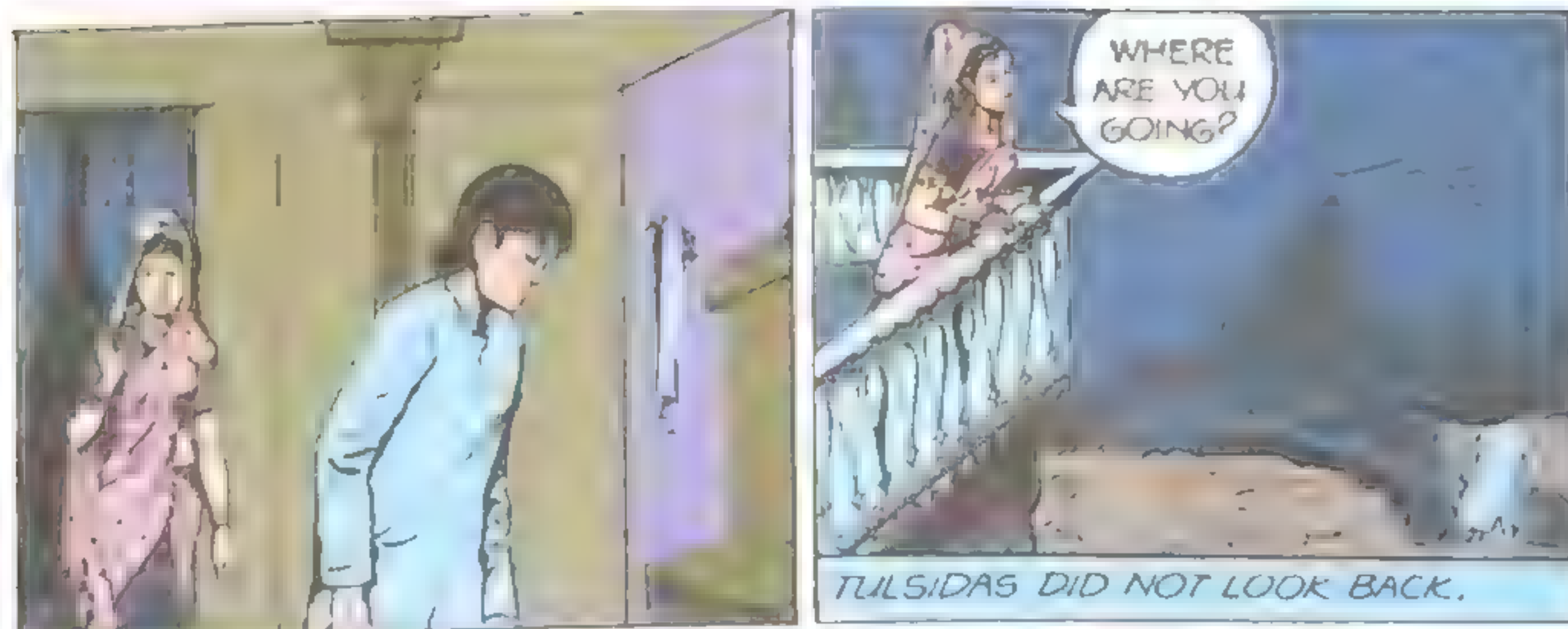
RATNA STOOD UP.



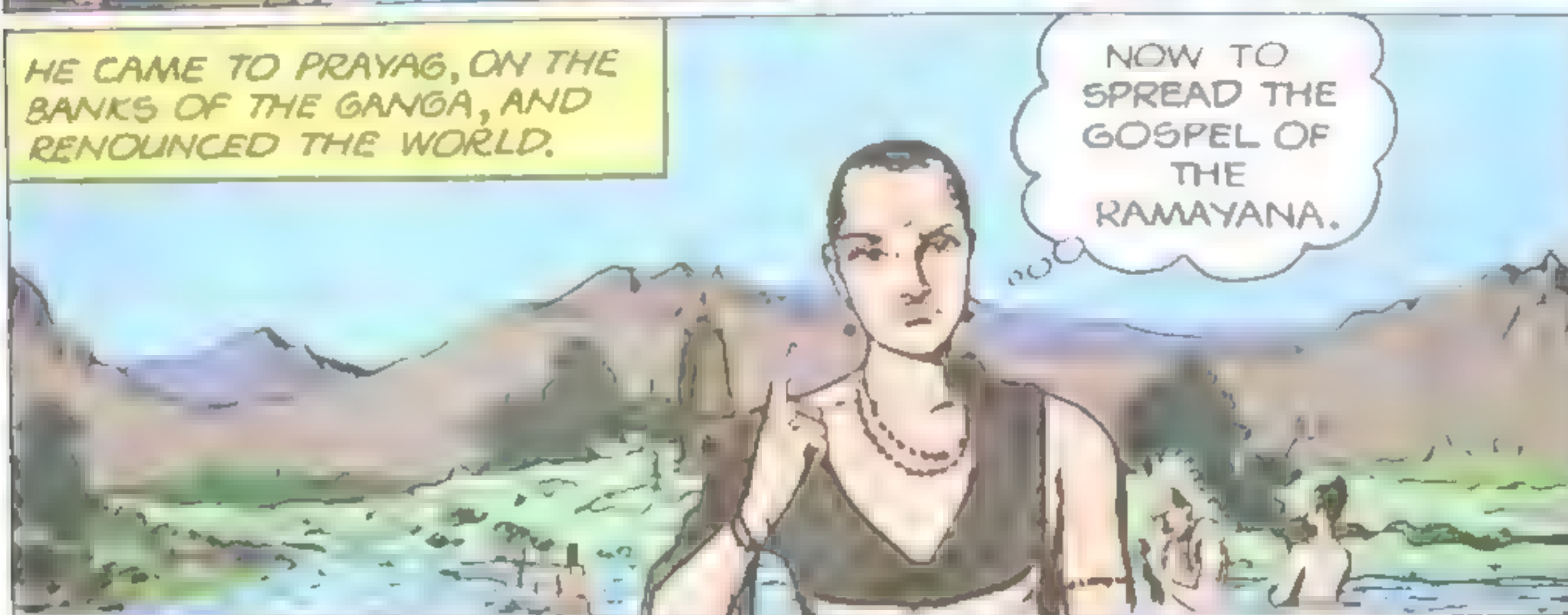
HAD YOU LOVED RAMA AS INTENSELY AS YOU DO THIS BUNDLE OF FLESH AND BONES, YOU WOULD HAVE OVERCOME ALL MORTAL FEARS.

TULSIDAS STOOD ROOTED TO THE GROUND, HE WAS SPEECHLESS.





HE CAME TO PRAYAG, ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGA, AND RENOUNCED THE WORLD.



FROM THERE HE PROCEEDED TO RAJAPUR AND BEGAN HIS DISCOURSES ON THE RAMAYANA IN HINDI, THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE REGION.

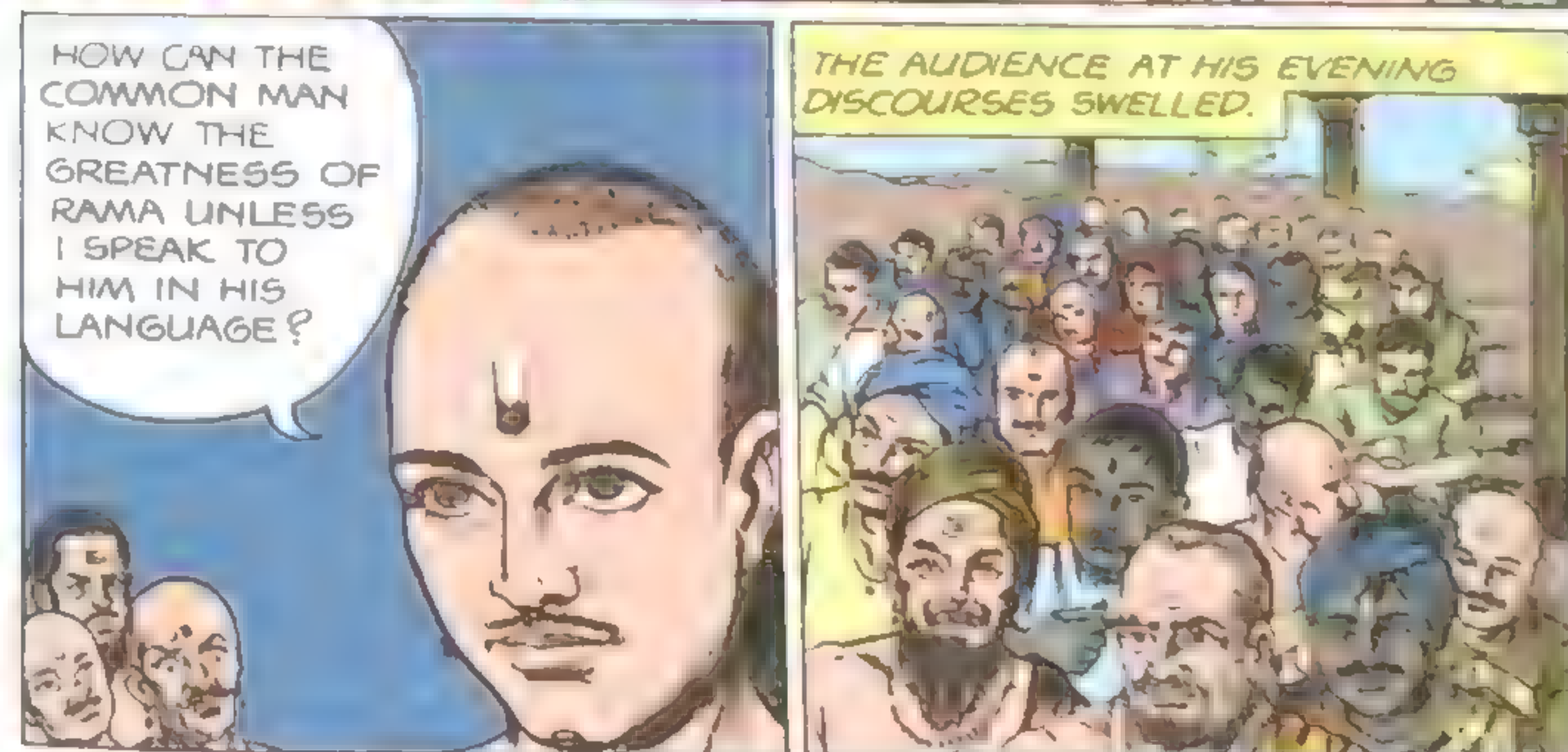
HOW SOOTHING HIS VERSES ARE! HIS WORDS ARE NOBLE BUT HIS LANGUAGE IS OURS!



MANY ORTHODOX BRAHMAN OBJECTED

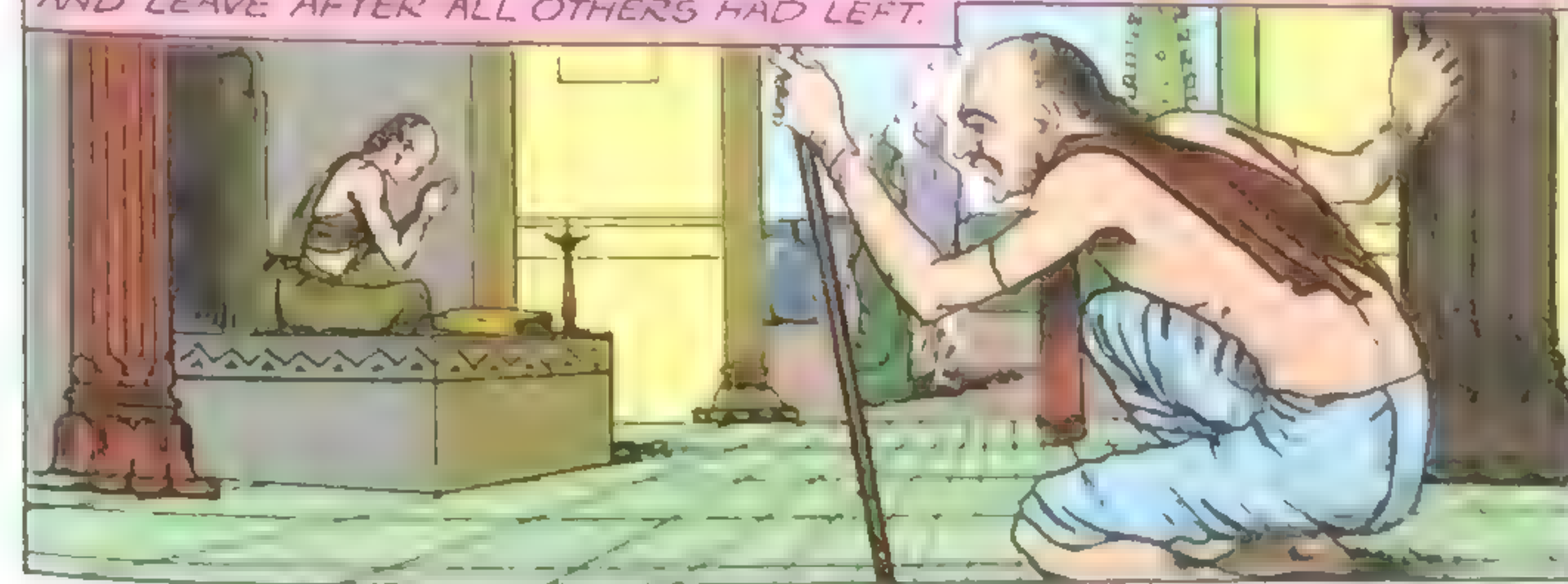


HOW CAN THE COMMON MAN KNOW THE GREATNESS OF RAMA UNLESS I SPEAK TO HIM IN HIS LANGUAGE?



THE AUDIENCE AT HIS EVENING DISCOURSES SWELLED.

AMONG THE LISTENERS WAS AN OLD MAN WHO WOULD COME AND LEAVE AFTER ALL OTHERS HAD LEFT.



ONE DAY, AFTER THE DISCOURSE
WHEN ALL BUT HE HAD LEFT—



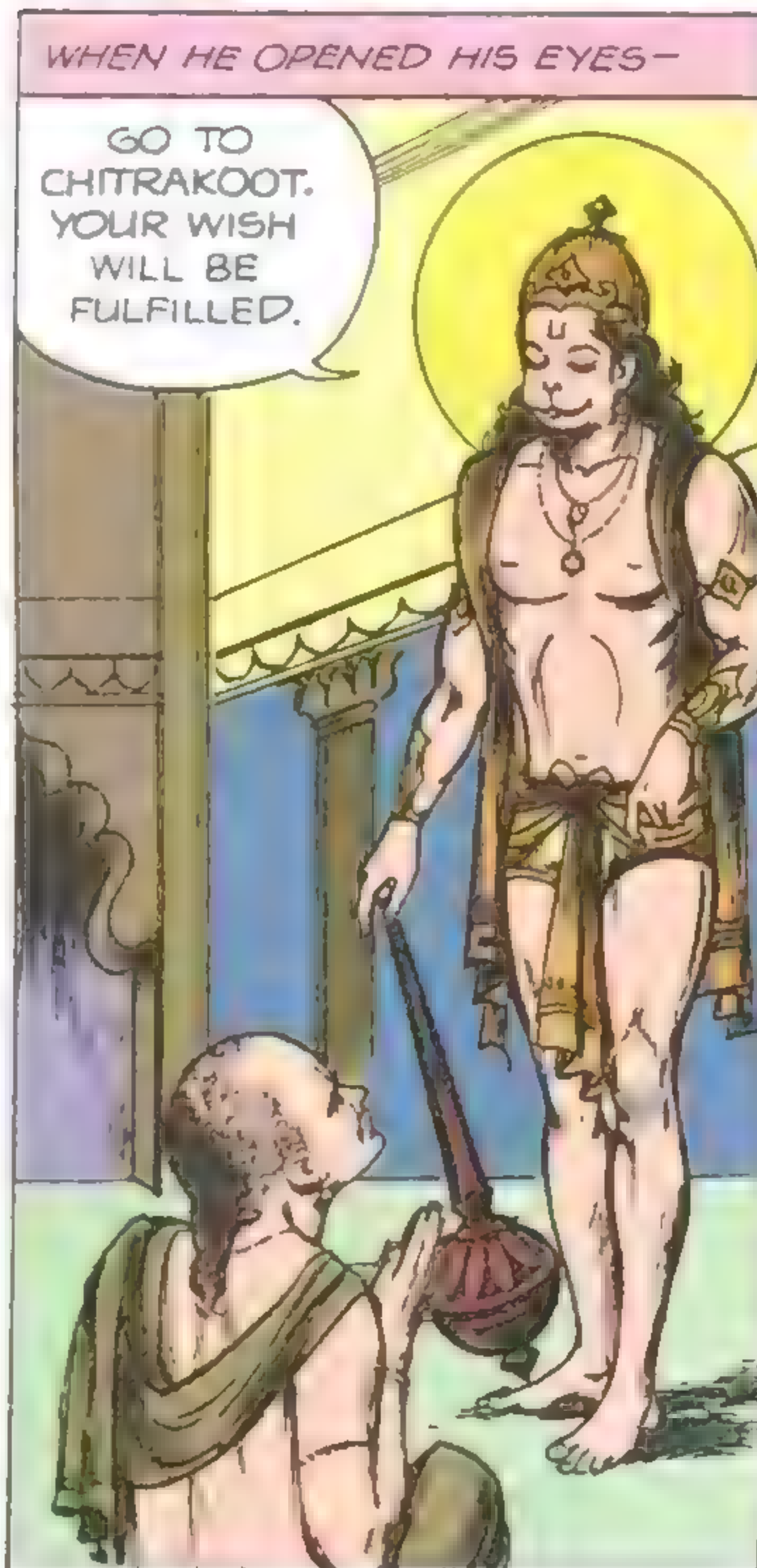
LORD!
I KNOW
YOU.

YOU ARE NONE
OTHER THAN
HANUMAN.
O FAVOURED
ONE, LEAD ME
TO RAMA.



WHEN HE OPENED HIS EYES—

GO TO
CHITRAKOOT.
YOUR WISH
WILL BE
FULFILLED.

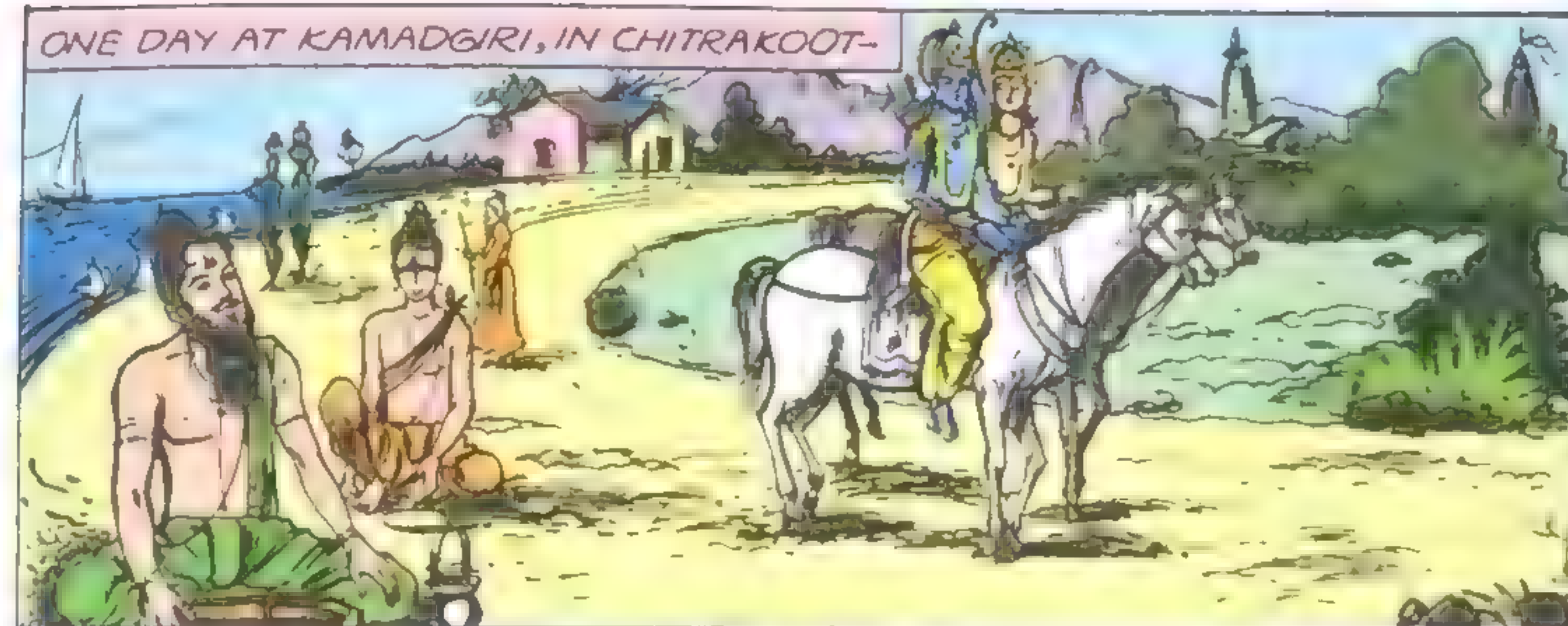


TULSIDAS WANTED TO PROSTRATE
AGAIN BEFORE HANUMAN.
BUT HE HAD DISAPPEARED.



TULSIDAS
PROCEEDED TO
CHITRAKOOT.

ONE DAY AT KAMADGIRI, IN CHITRAKOOT—



JUST
THEN—

DIDN'T YOU
RECOGNISE THEM?
THEY WERE
RAMA AND
LAKSHMANA.



LORD! I BEG OF
YOU. LET ME
SEE THEM AGAIN.

WELL THEN.
TOMORROW
ON THE BANK
OF THE
MANDAKINI.



AND HANUMAN DISAPPEARED.

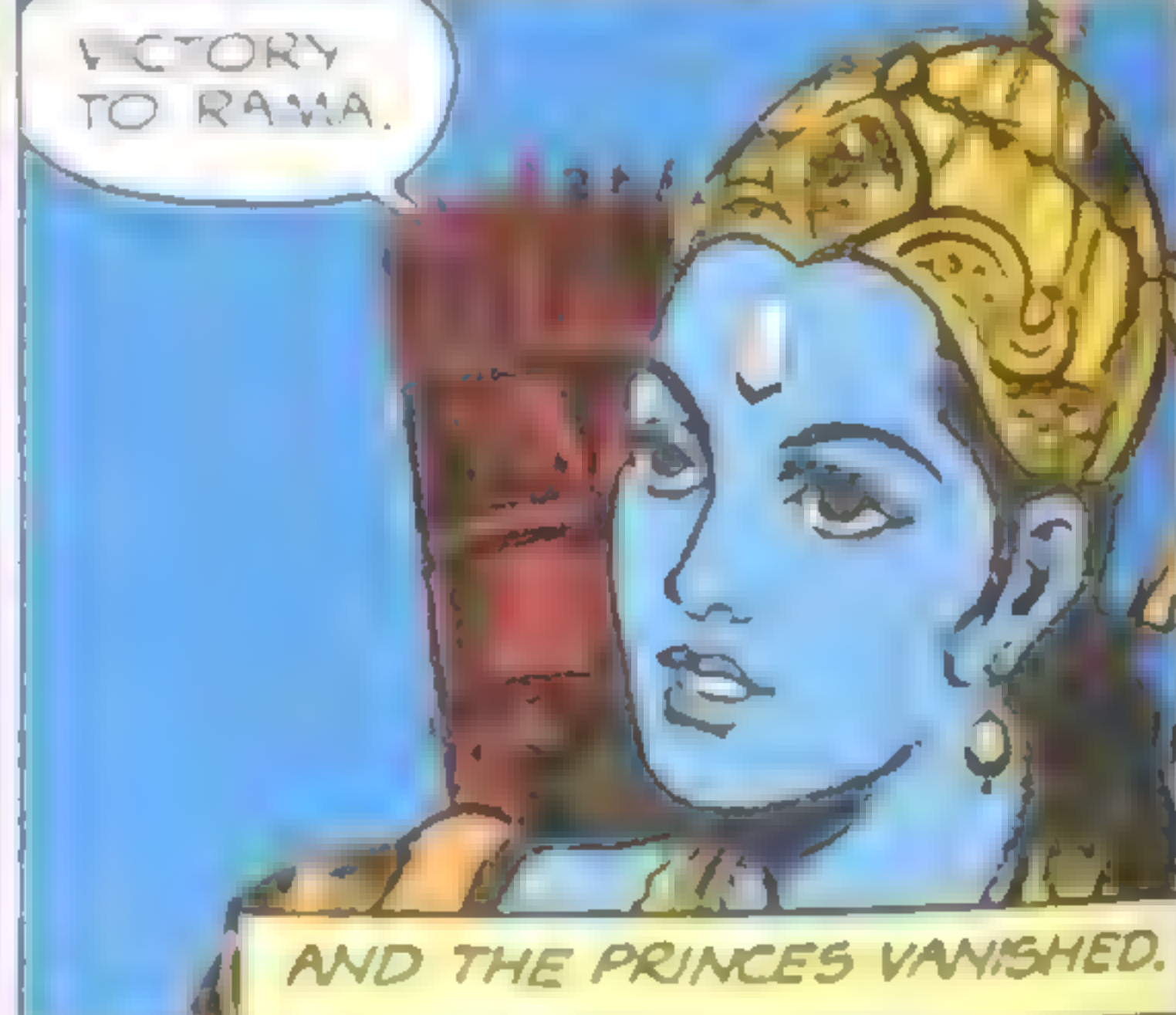
THE NEXT DAY, TULSIDAS WAS SITTING ON THE BANK OF THE MANDAKINI,
RUBBING SANDALWOOD ON THE STONE, WHEN—



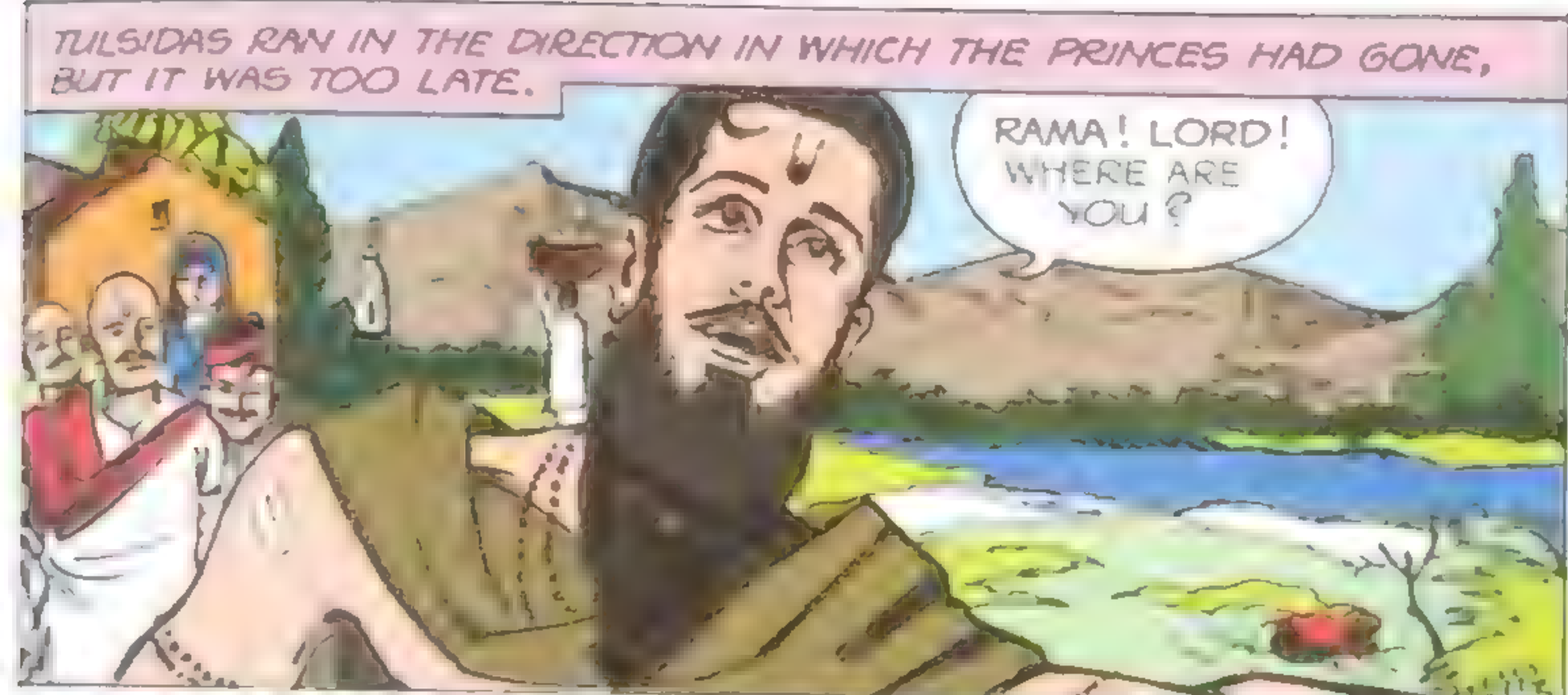
PLEASE APPLY
TILAK ON MY
FOREHEAD.



BUT THE SECOND PRINCE HESITATED TO REPEAT THE WORDS OF TULSIDAS



TULSIDAS CONTINUED TO APPLY 'TILAK' ON THE FOREHEADS OF THE OTHER DEVOTEES. JUST THEN -



TULSIDAS WAS A CHANGED MAN AFTER THE INCIDENT. THE TOUCH OF RAMA HAD COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED HIM. AT HIS EVENING DISCOURSES THE CROWDS SWELLED.



ONE DAY, ANANTA OF BADRI CAME TO HIM.

I HAVE BAD NEWS FOR YOU, SWAMIJI. RATNA AND HER FATHER WERE KILLED WHILE RESCUING SOME PEOPLE FROM THE FLOODED GANGA.

ANANTA! THEY WERE NOBLE SOULS. IT WAS INDEED MY WIFE'S ADVICE THAT TOOK ME TO THE GRACE OF RAMA.

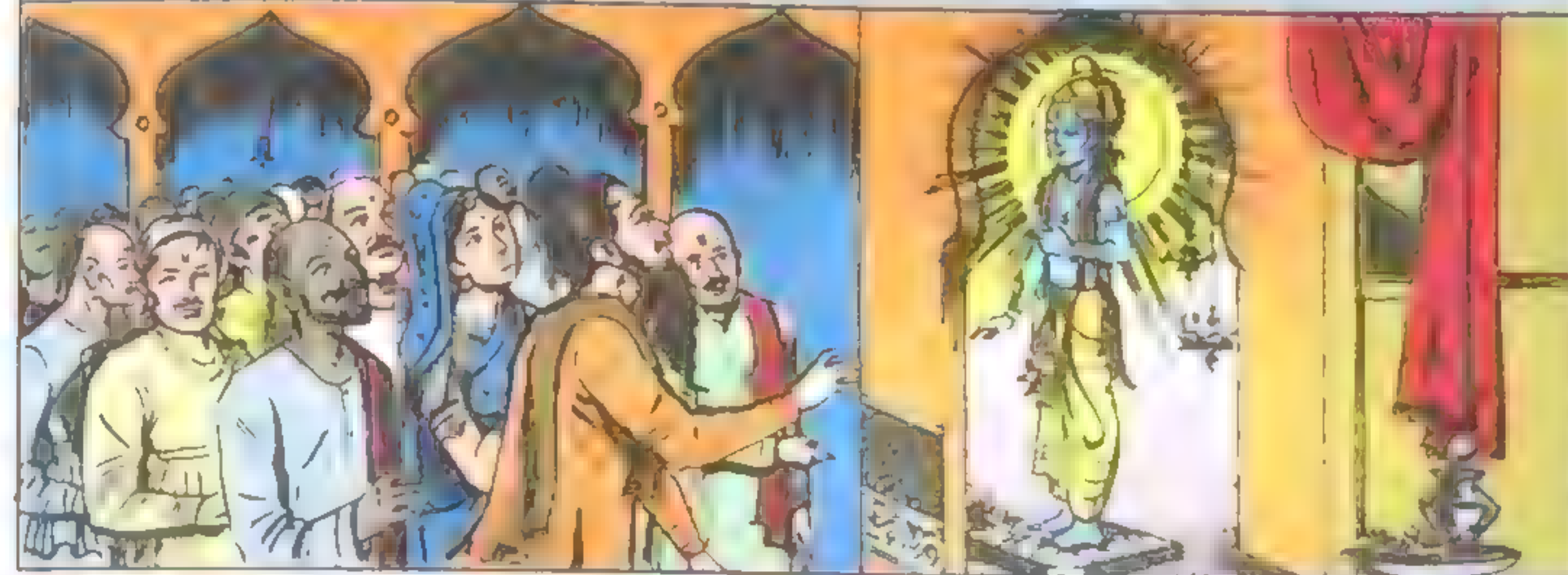
ANANTA TOLD TULSIDAS THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO GO ON A PILGRIMAGE.

I SHALL GO WITH YOU AND SPREAD THE LOVE OF RAMA THROUGHOUT THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF THIS COUNTRY.

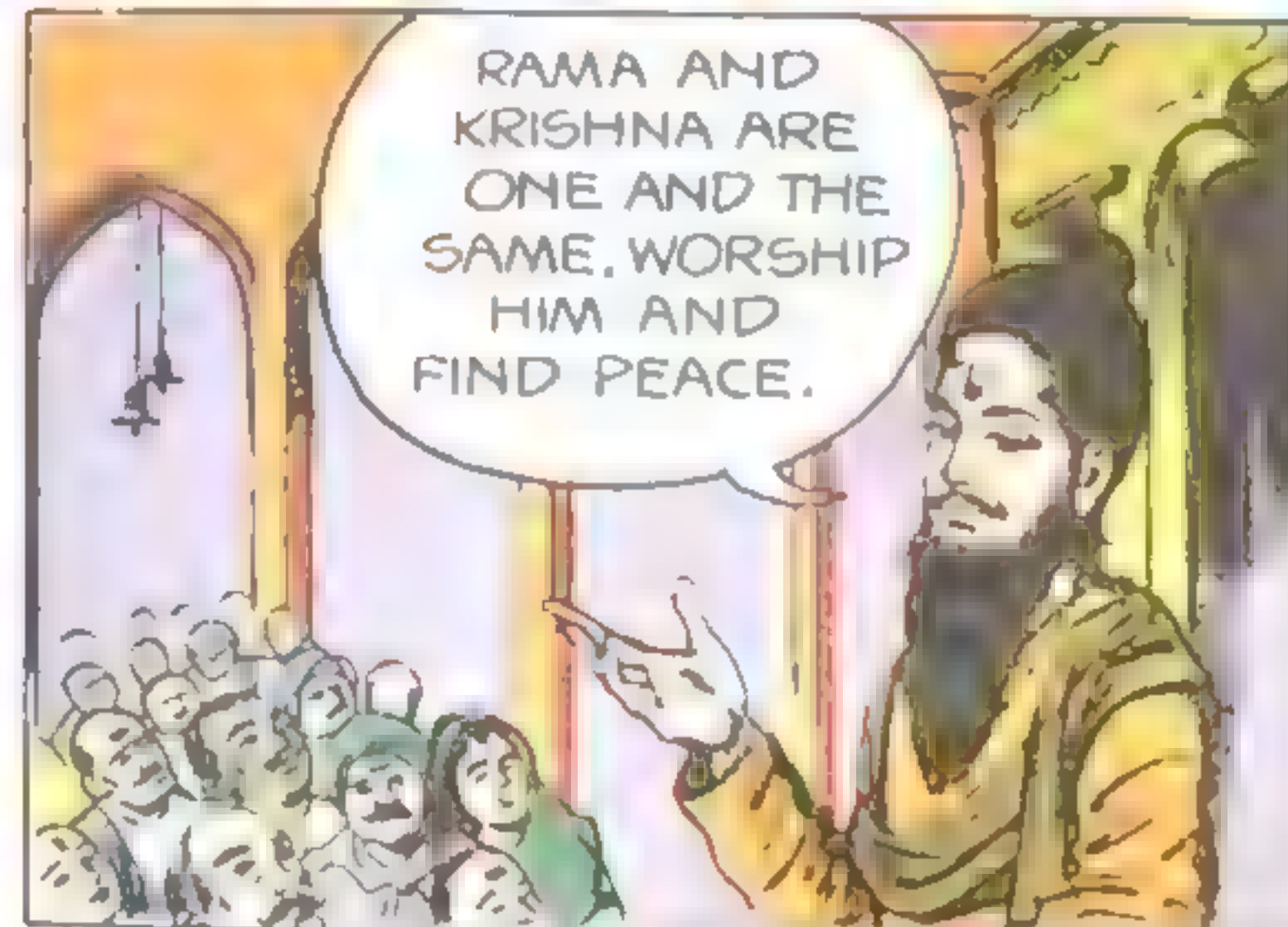
THEY WENT NORTH FIRST, TO VRINDAVAN—

TULSI IS A DEVOTEE OF RAMA. WILL HE BOW TO KRISHNA?

AND THE DEVOTEES SAW NONE OTHER THAN RAMA IN THE IDOL.



RAMA AND KRISHNA ARE ONE AND THE SAME. WORSHIP HIM AND FIND PEACE.

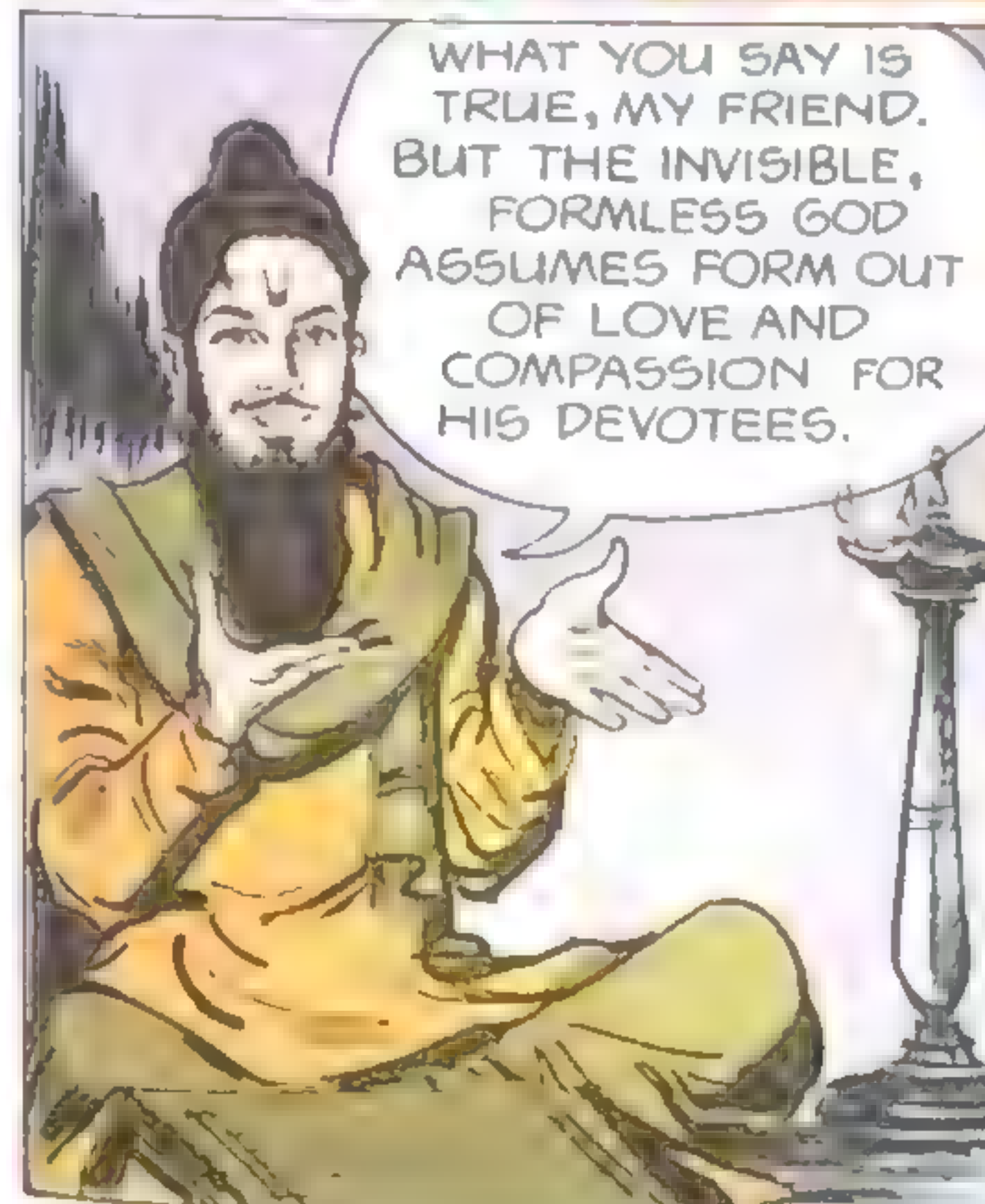


A SCHOLAR OBJECTED.

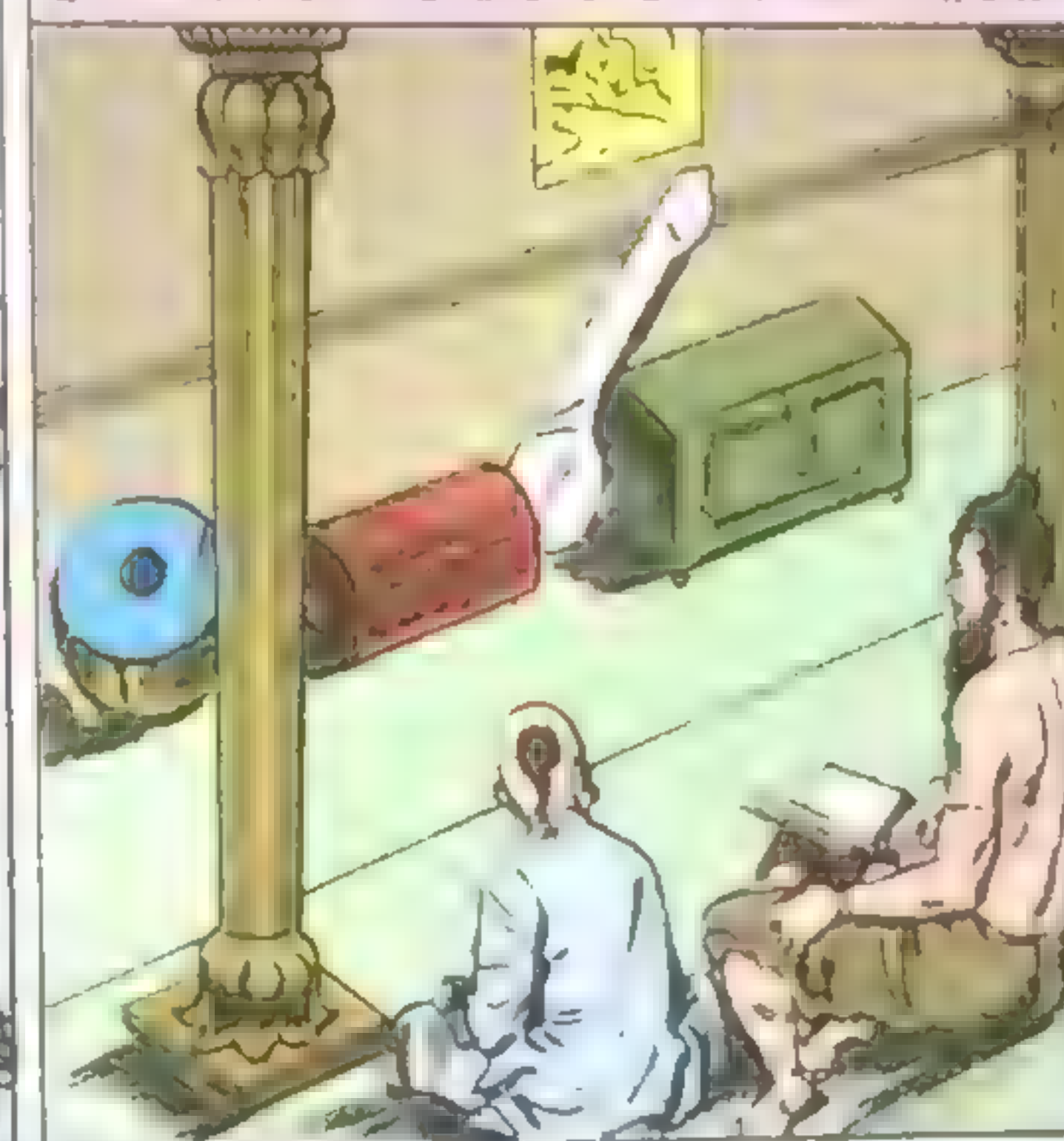
GOD IS FORMLESS, ATTRIBUTELESS AND INVISIBLE.

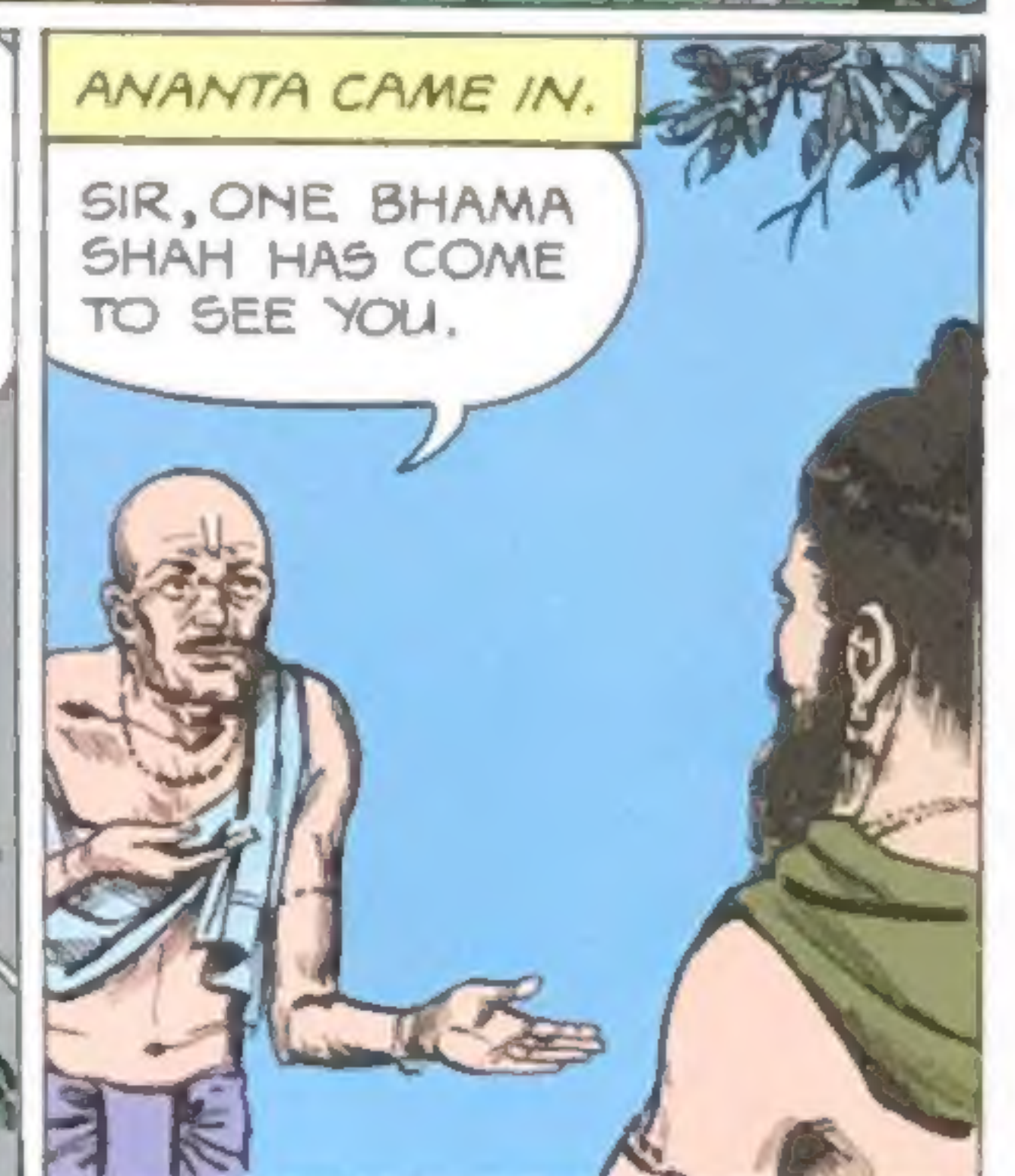
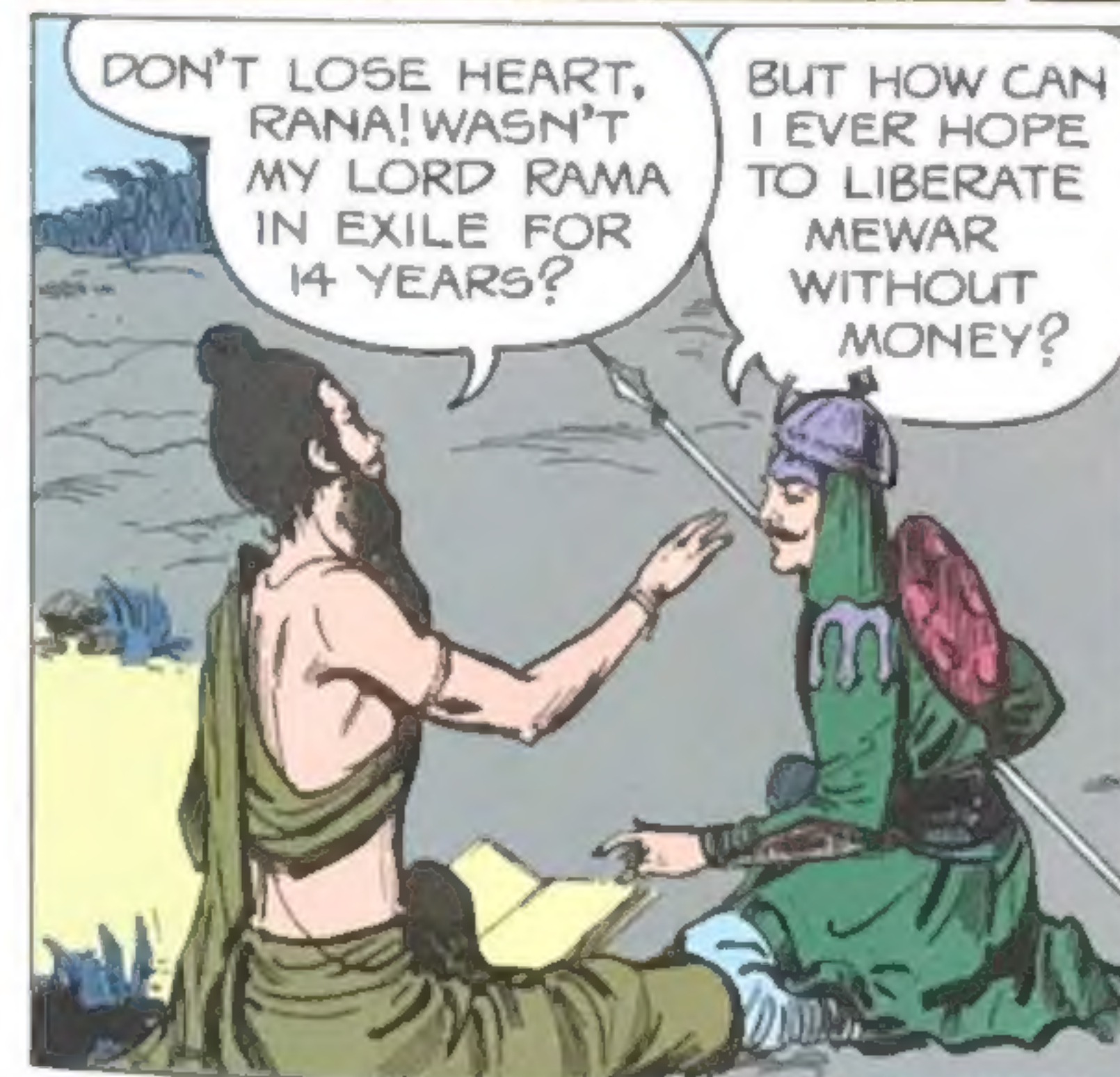
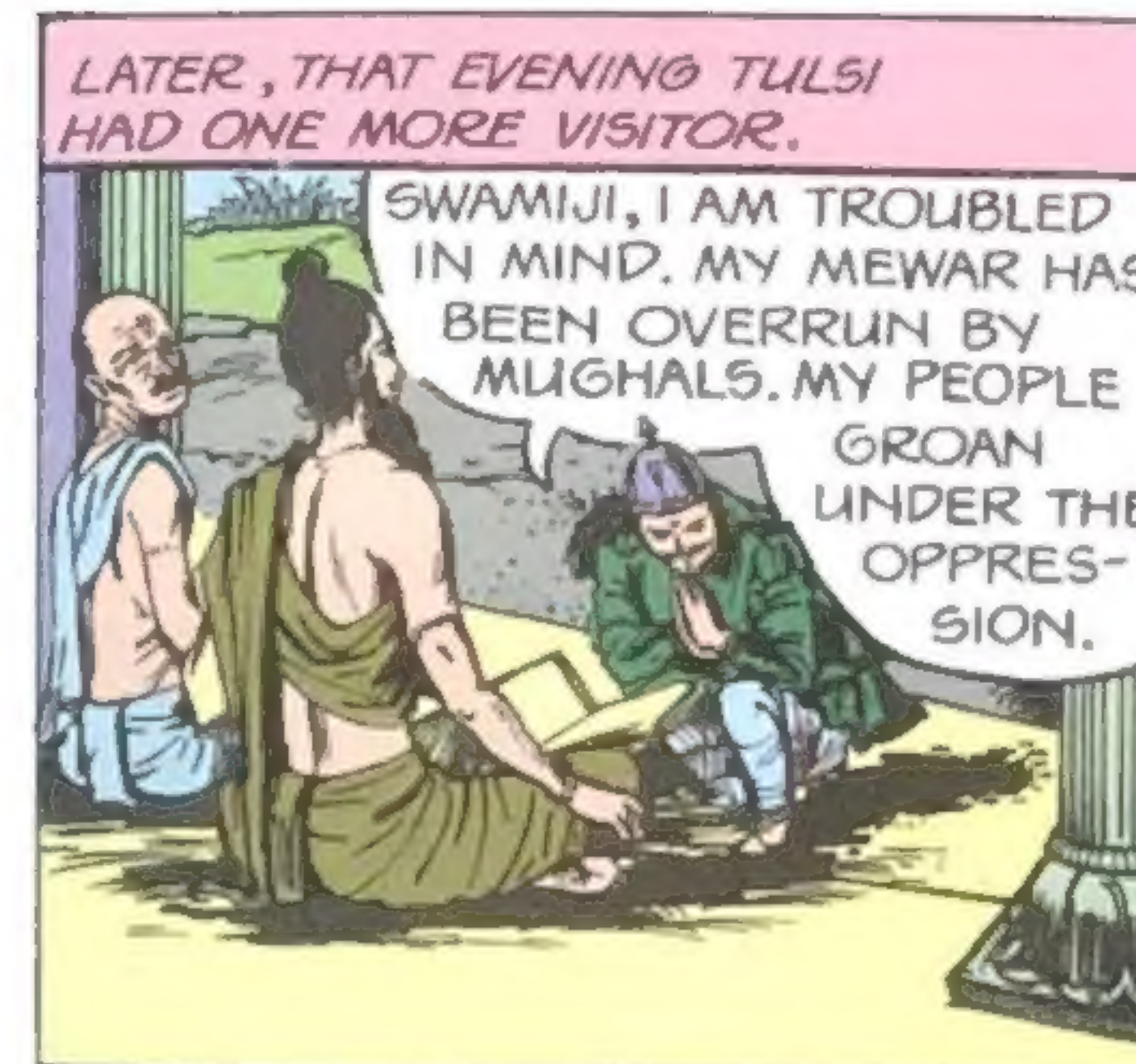
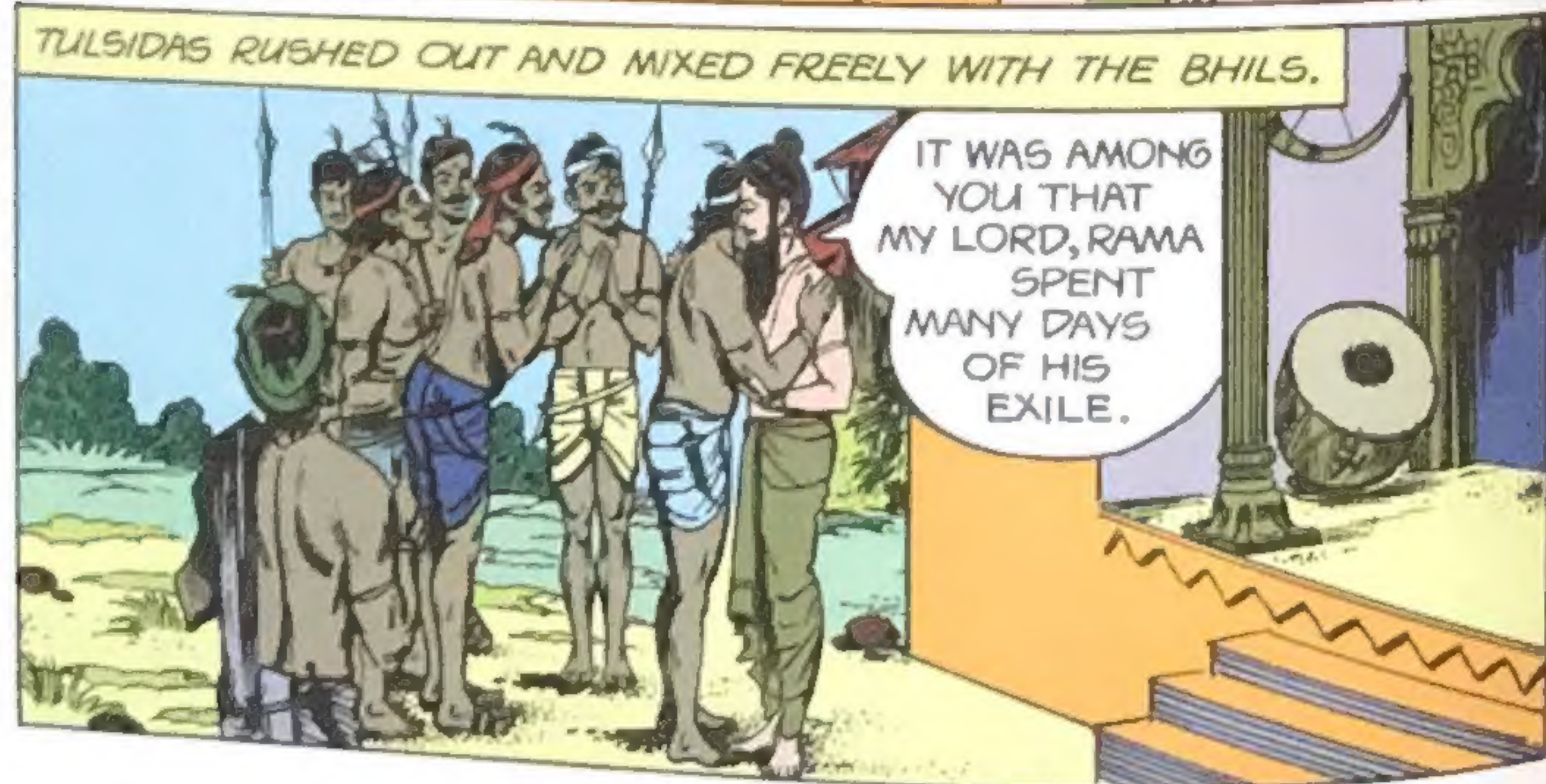
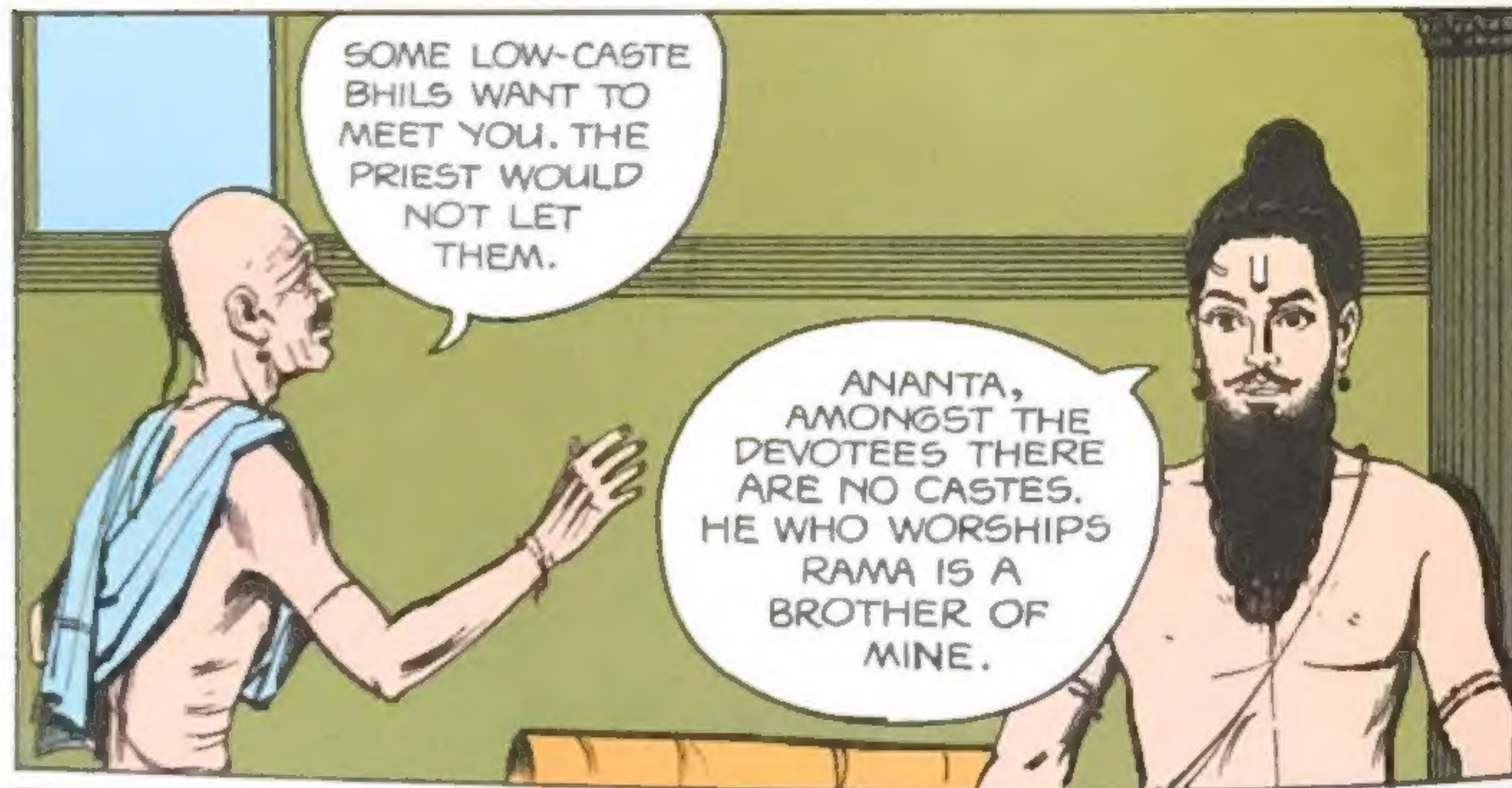
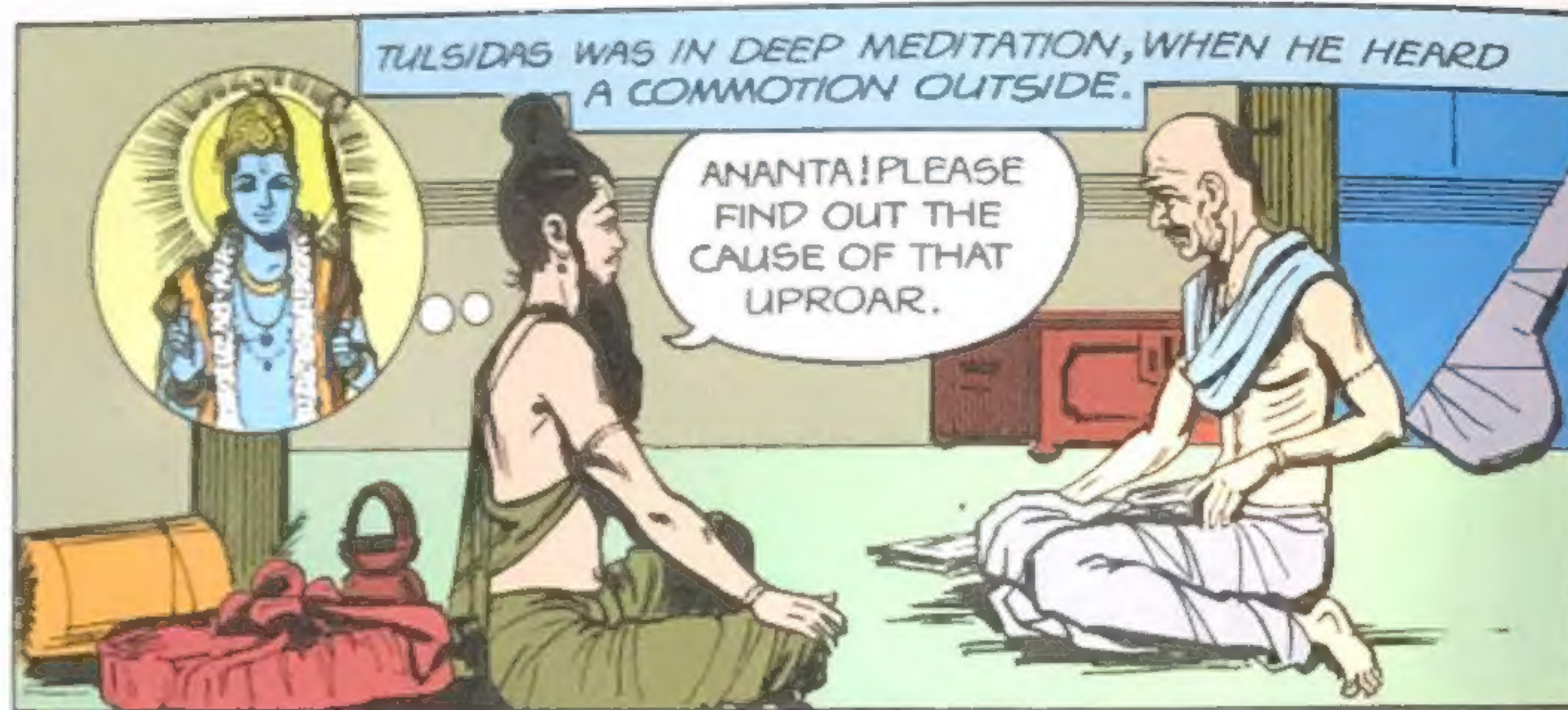


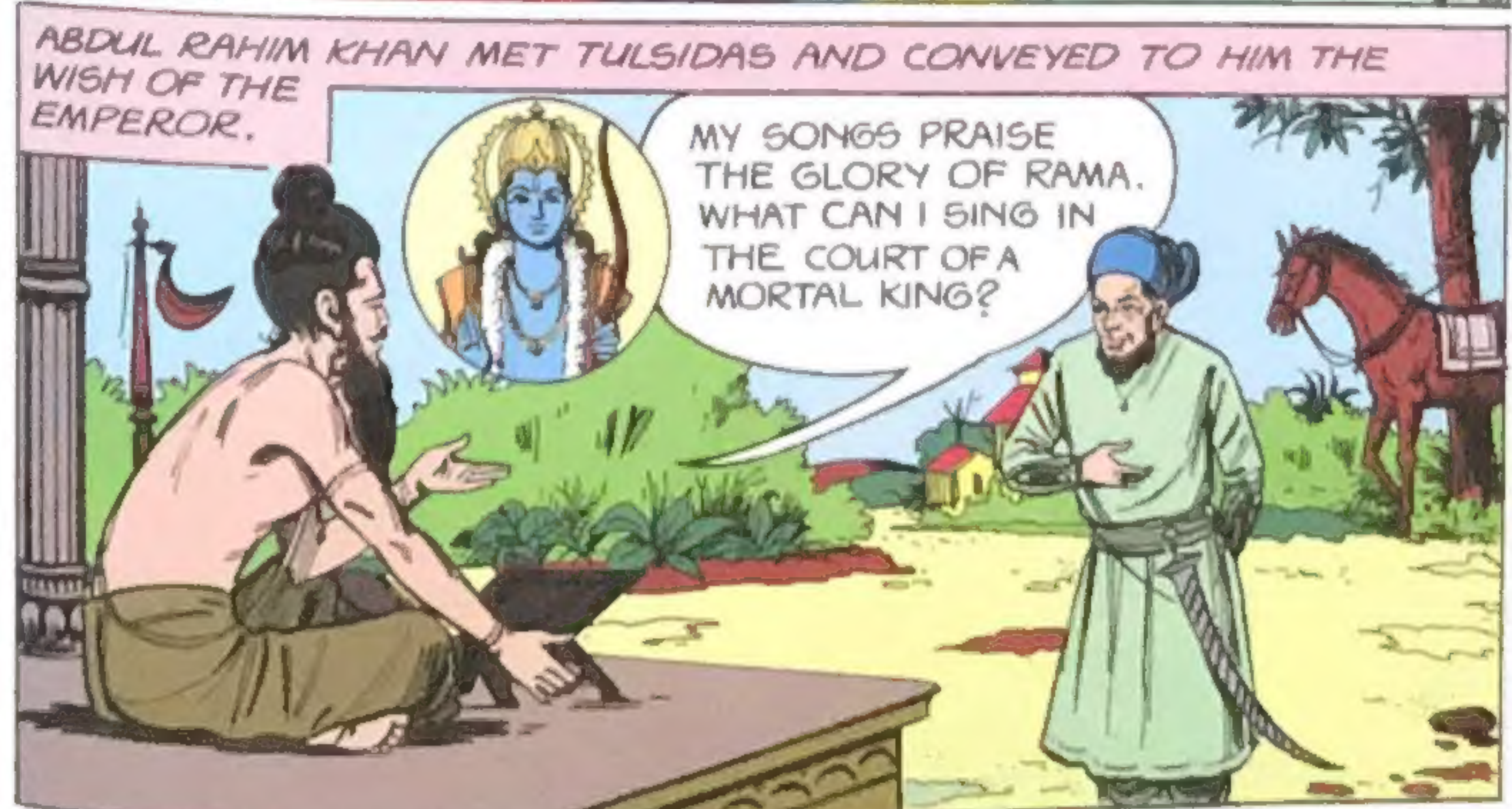
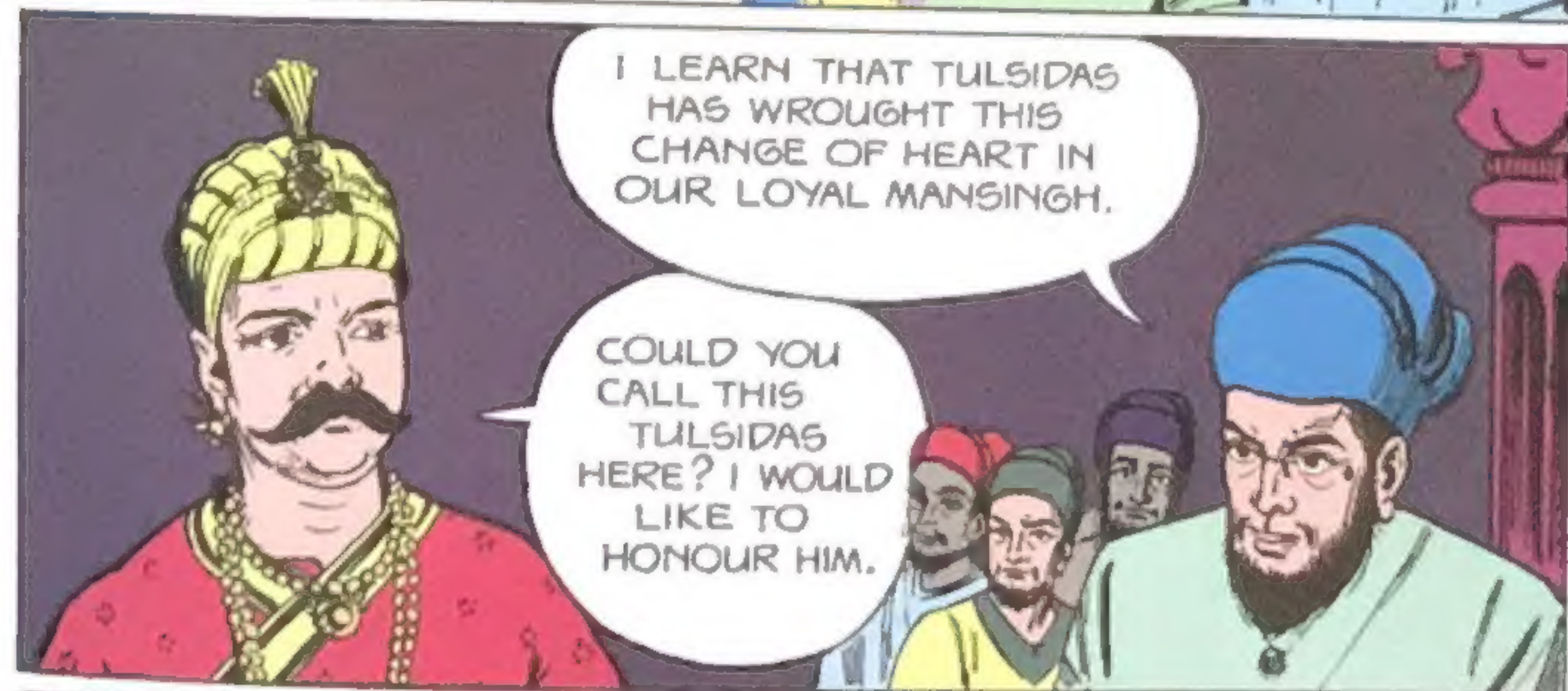
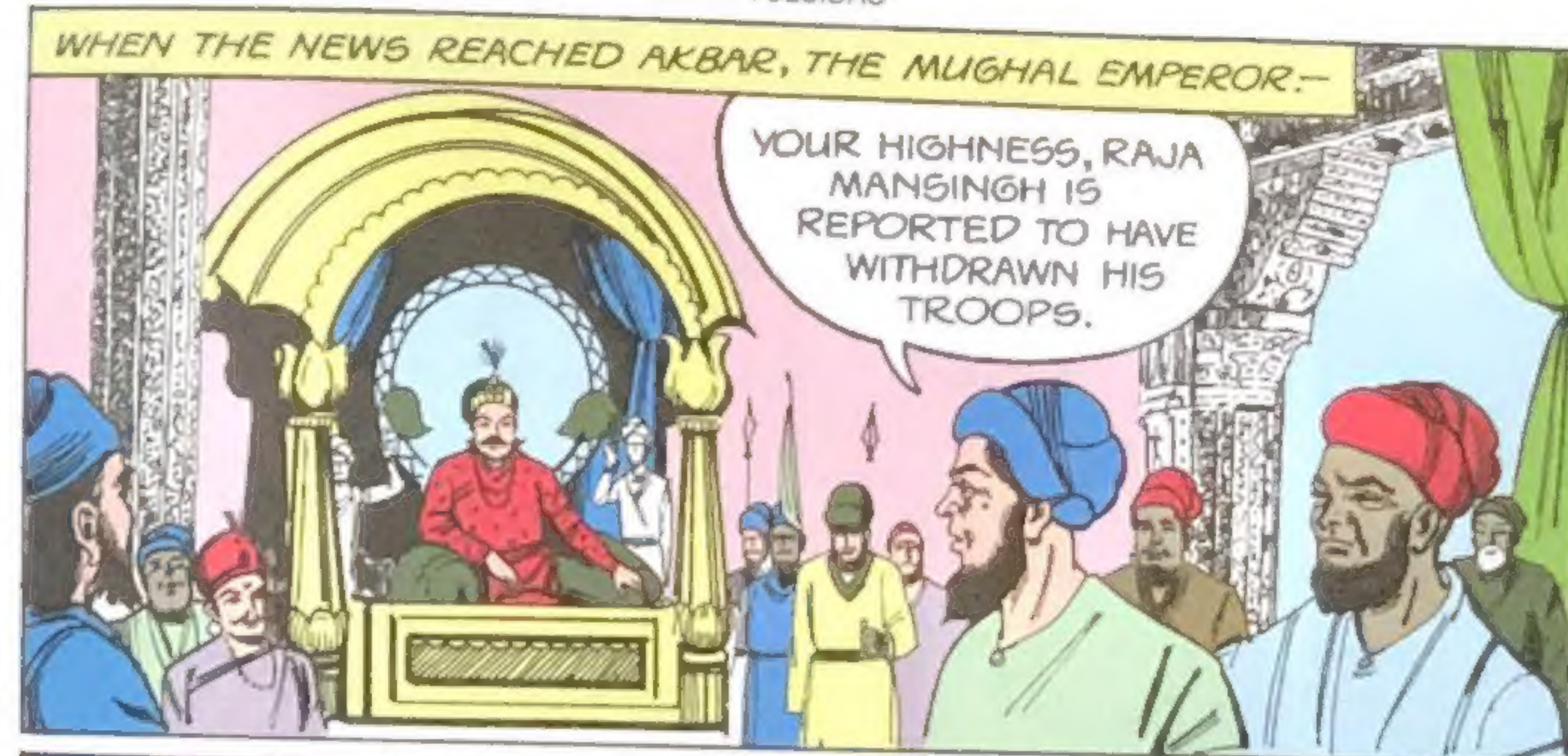
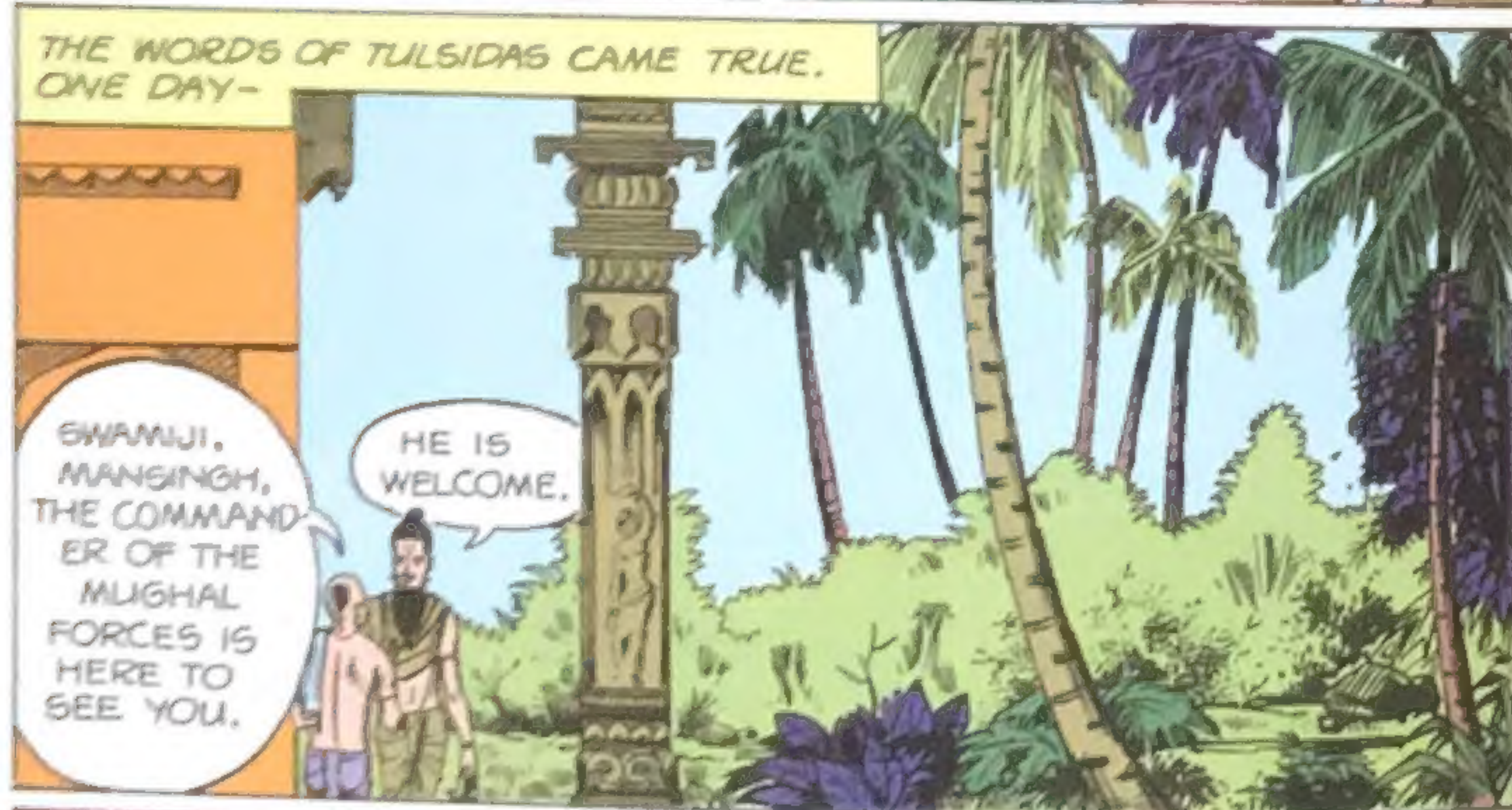
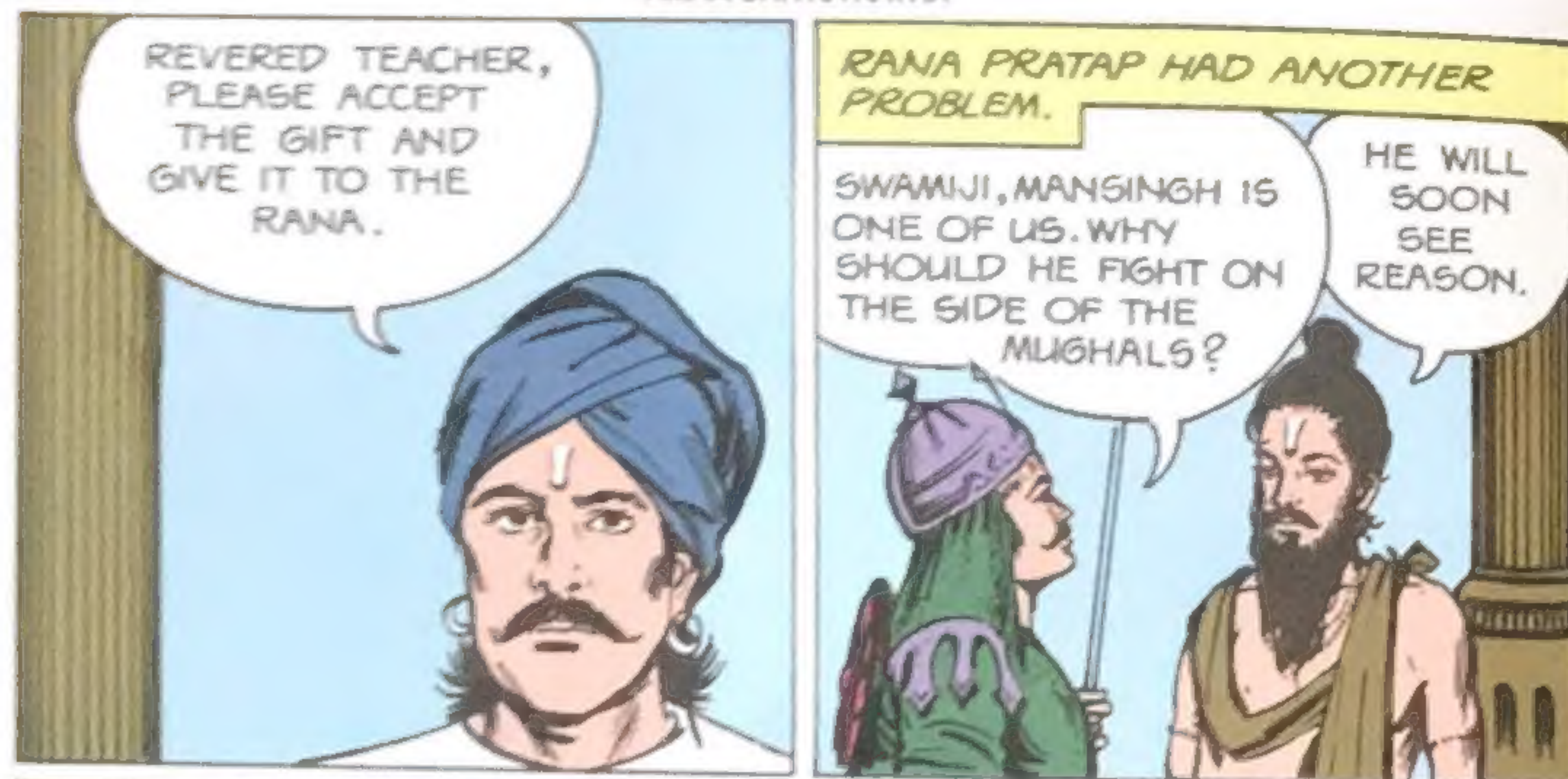
WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, MY FRIEND. BUT THE INVISIBLE, FORMLESS GOD ASSUMES FORM OUT OF LOVE AND COMPASSION FOR HIS DEVOTEES.

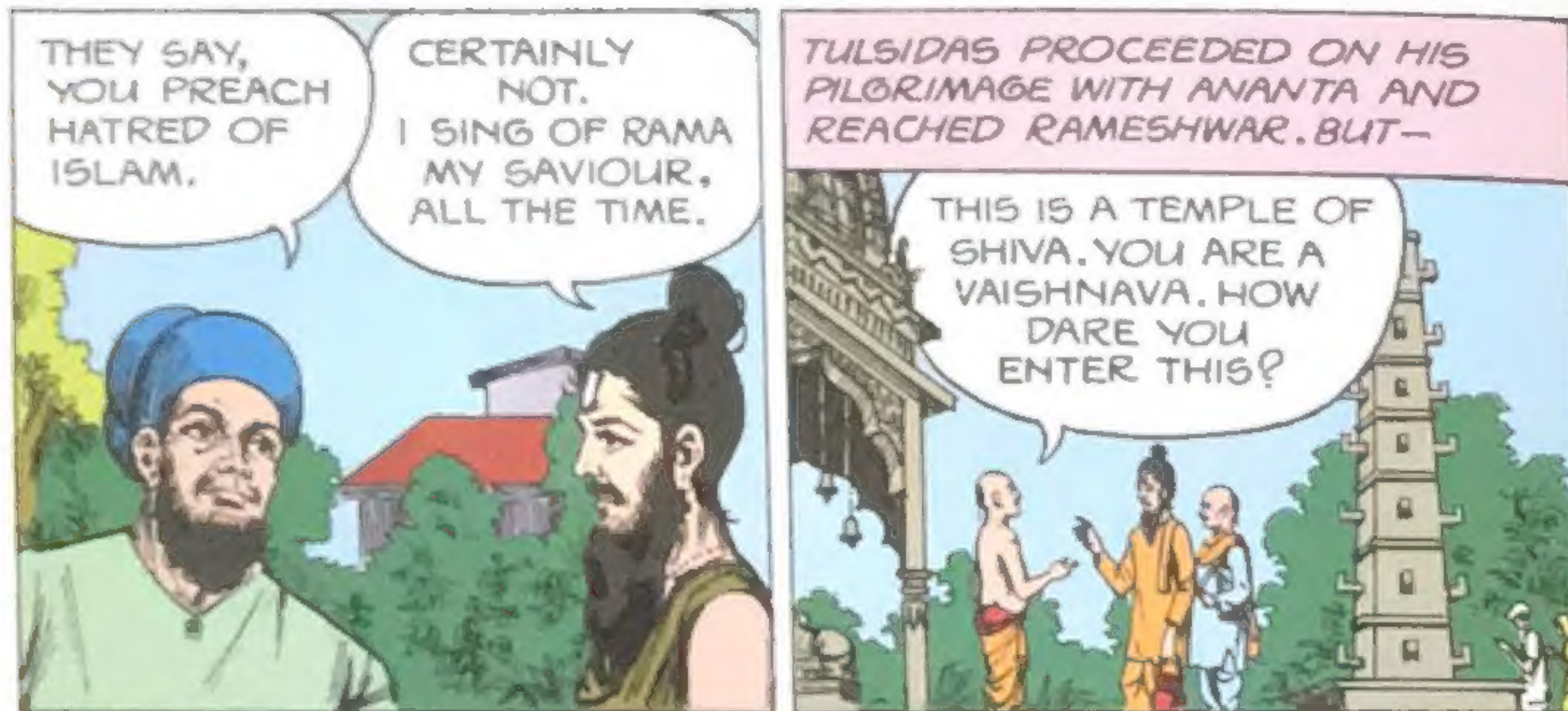


ONCE THEY CAMPED IN A TEMPLE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF RAJASTHAN.

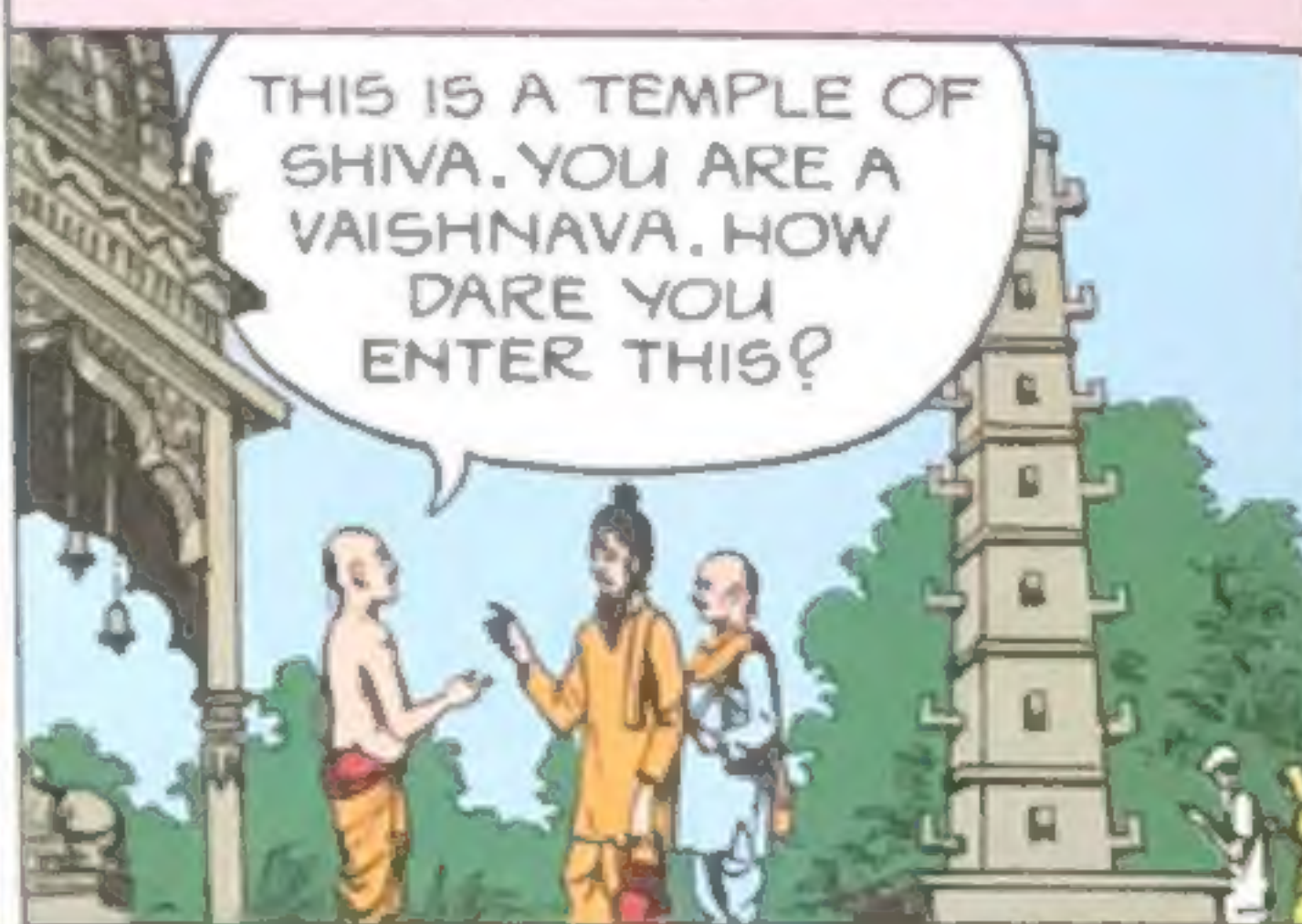




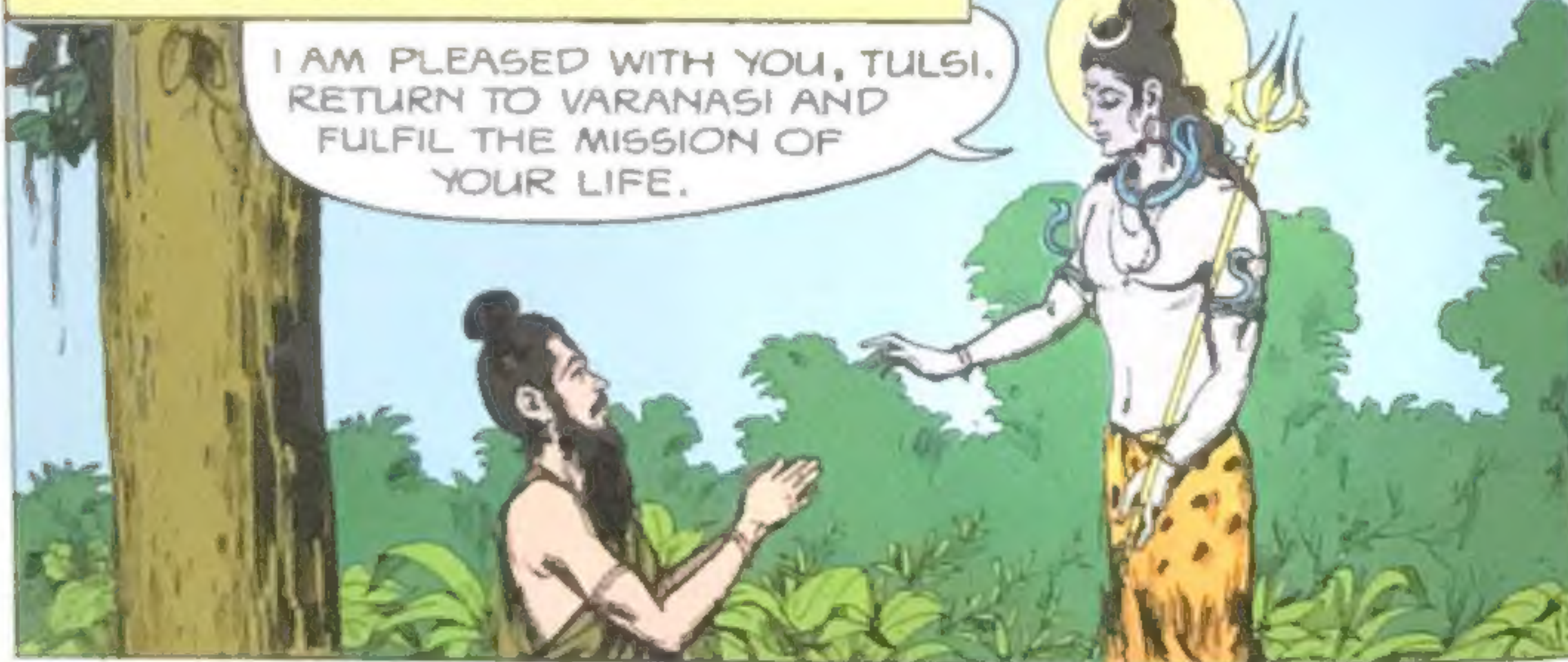




TULSIDAS PROCEEDED ON HIS PILGRIMAGE WITH ANANTA AND REACHED RAMESHWAR. BUT—



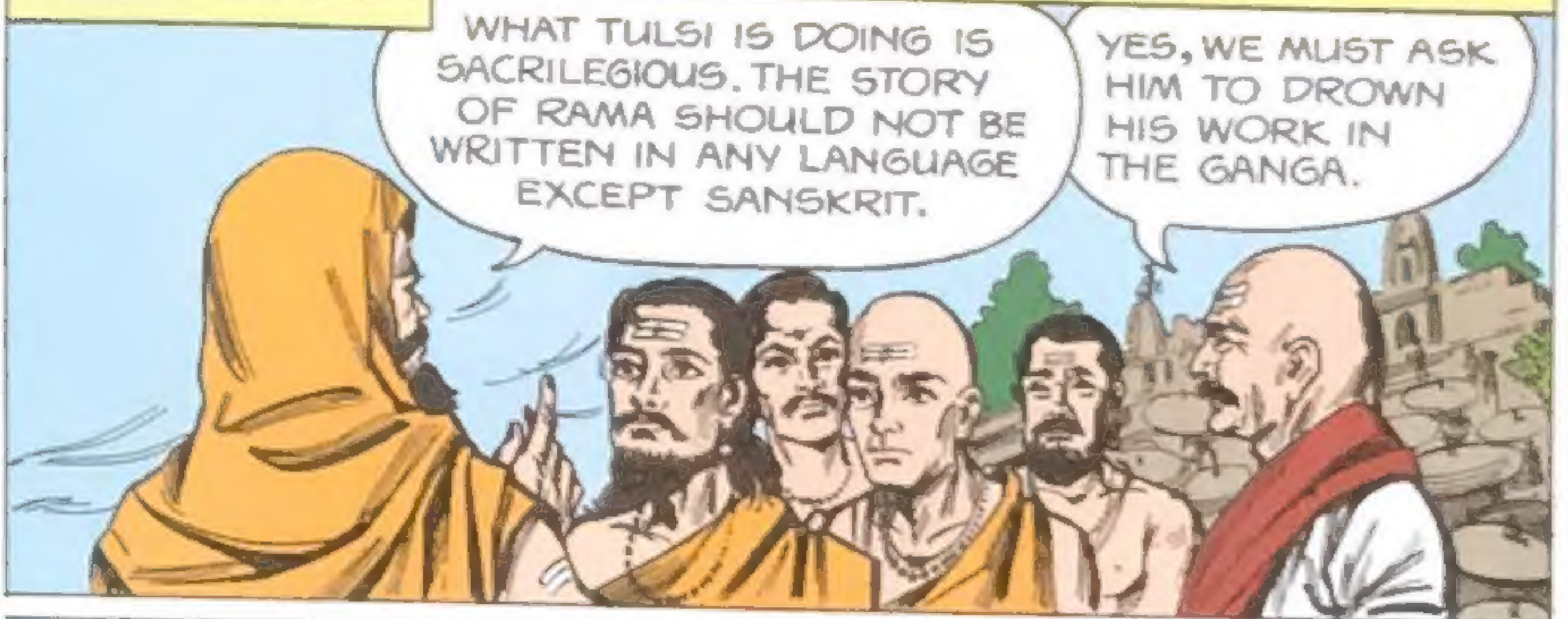
TULSIDAS SAT OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE AND PRAYED TO LORD SHIVA. SOON—



TULSI RETURNED TO VARANASI. HE BUILT A HUT NEAR ASI GHAT AND WROTE "RAMCHARIT-MANAS", THE STORY OF RAMA, IN HINDI.



WHEN THE PANDITS OF VARANASI CAME TO KNOW OF THIS, THEY WERE ENRAGED.



THAT NIGHT THE TWO STEALTHILY APPROACHED THE HUT OF TULSIDAS.



THE NEXT DAY, THE PANDITS MET AND SENT A DEPUTATION TO MEET TULSIDAS.

TULSIDAS, WE THINK IT IS QUITE IMPROPER ON YOUR PART TO WRITE THE RAMAYANA IN HINDI. WE WANT YOU TO DROWN YOUR WORK IN THE GANGA.

FRIENDS, I WANT THE GOSPEL TO REACH EVERY HOME IN THIS COUNTRY AND IN EVERY LANGUAGE.

WE WILL KEEP YOUR BOOK ALONG WITH OTHER RELIGIOUS BOOKS NEAR LORD SHIVA. LET HIM GIVE HIS VERDICT.

I AGREE.

THE PANDITS KEPT MANY BOOKS NEAR THE LINGA OF SHIVA.

NEXT MORNING, WHEN THEY OPENED THE DOOR OF VISHWANATHA TEMPLE —

LOOK, "RAM-CHARIT-MANAS" IS RIGHT ON TOP.

THAT THEN IS THE VERDICT OF LORD SHIVA.

TULSIDAS LIVED LONG AND HIS FAME SPREAD FAR AND WIDE. HIS RAMCHARIT-MANAS IS TODAY ONE OF THE MOST TREASURED POSSESSIONS OF THIS COUNTRY.

WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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The Golden Mongoose
The King In
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The Lord Of Lanka
The Pandava Princes
The Pandavas In Hiding
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VISIONARIES

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